

A LETTER *// = Lc*

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THANKS

From the AUTHOR

O F

S. J. K.

SURE-FOOTING

To his Answerer Mr. J. T.

J. Sargeant

Quis autem magis de his novit, hic ne seductus homo qui etiam nunc superest, & hucusque in hoc mundo versatur, aut qui ante nos Testes fuerunt, habentes ante nos Traditionem in Ecclesia; qui- que etiam à Patribus suis Traditum acceperunt, quemadmodum etiam hi à Patribus suis didicerunt qui ante ipsos fuerunt, quo- modo Ecclesia acceptam à Patribus suis veram fidem usque huc continet, itemque Traditiones. Epiphan: contra Aetium. hæc. 75.

Paris, 1666.

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S I R,

YOur Friend Mr. *Stillingfleet*, who, I thank him, professes a great deal of *real kindness* for mee, tells your self in the beginning of his *Appendix*, that *your performances* in your Book have been *so clear and satisfactory*, that hee hopes Mr. S. in stead of another Letter of directions to his Answerer, will write you one of Thanks, for the Reason and Kindness you have shew'd him throughout your Book. I hate to be ungratefull, and have that *reall kindness* for him and your self too as not to suffer your hopes to be defeated. My Obligations of Gratitude hee conceives to spring from a twofold Head; the Reason and the Kindness you have shown mee. The former of which is to be examin'd by reducing the respective parts of your Discourse to Grounds or Principles; which I shall do when it shall please God to give me leisure and health to answer your Book; and I promise you faithfully to own as much Reason in it as *these* will allow mee: I fear you may dislike the verdict of Principles and think them *discourteous* because of their inflexible genius, and *self-confident* too, because they love naturally to express themselves with an Assuredness, and are oft so bold as (unconcern'd in the Sceptical humour of others) to talk of those bug-bears to Fancy, Evidence and

Demonstration ; But be assur'd, Sir, though they are not altogether so good-natur'd nor bashfull as your timorous quivering Probabilities, which you phrase *modest*, yet they are very *just* and *honest*; and, as they cannot flatter you, so neither will they injure you in the least. My other Obligation to Gratitude is the *Kindness* you have shew'd me; and, as Mr. *Stillingfleet* sayes very truly, *throughout your Book*, which it were a Sin to deny. For I know no greater *Kindness* from one that opposes me than to write in such a manner as to put himself upon the greatest Disadvantages imaginable to give me so many Advantages against him and his Cause. Nor am I to expect your Intention should go along with your Favours; 'tis abundant *Kindness* in an Adversary that by his means I enjoy the *reality* of the Benefit; and this I have receiv'd from you, never to bee forgotten but with Ingratitude. As oft as you omit what's important, mistake either voluntarily or weakly, triumph causlessly, injure me undeservedly, cavill groundlessly, prevaricate from the business purposely, revile bitterly, jeer sillily; or falsify and pervert my meaning or words palpably; so many *reall Kindnesses* you conferr upon your poor Servant, of which in this Letter of mine both to your self and the world I here make my hearty Profession and Acknowledgment.

2. And first I am to give you very humble *thanks* for totally waving to take notice of my
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Letter to my Answerer. The whole scope of it was to request you would hold to a Method which was evidently *Conclusive*; that you would begin with some *First Principles*, and vouch them to be, as First Principles should be, *self-evident*; That (as all Art and Common Sense gives it) you would not produce any Thing against Tradition till you show it depends not on Tradition for its Certainty; that you would either confess your Testimonies unapt to Certify, or declare in what their virtue of Certifying consists, which must needs either show them feeble if they be such; or, if otherwise, enforce and strengthen them: That you would uphold your Arguments *satisfactory*, that is, able to subdue the Understanding to Assent, and show us how they come by that virtue; with diverse other *Requests*, not *Prescriptions* as you call them, onely tending to make a short End of Controversy by bringing Truth quickly to a clearing by the way of Principles. Now, who sees not that I had oblig'd my self to the same severe Laws of Concluding, by proposing them to you; and so, had you had any Principles worthy to be call'd such, or the confidence in your Cause to venture upon any Conclusive method, you had gain'd a notable advantage against me in laying hold of that method and obliging me to stand to it, because I was the Proposer of it. At least you might have pleas'd to have shown my Way Inconclusive, and substituted

and establish't a better, in case you had thought any Evident or Conclusive method your Advantage. But 'tis a manifest signe you judg'd any rigorous way of Concluding unsutable to your Causes and your own Interest; and that to continue still on Foot Inconclusive & endlessly-talking wayes of Discourse, (as is yours, which consists in being able to say a great many pretty plausible any-things to every thing) was more proportion'd and advantageous to your moderate, modest, courteous and probable Faith; which is (I dare say for it) far from that Boldness and *Self-confidence* as to talk of *Principles*, *Evidence*, *Demonstration*, or even *Certainty*, unless minc't and allay'd with the Epithet *Sufficient*; though you will never show us how acknowledg'd *possibility to be otherwise* can ever convince us *sufficiently* to Assent the thing *is so*, or why a Capacity to bee false for any thing wee know, is not the very notion of Incertainty, and so most abusively pinn'd to the notion of Certainty. Now, that you should so perfectly wave speaking to that Letter, it being particularly directed to your self, whereas the Book you pretend to answer was not; the end aym'd at in it being by all men's Confession very importantly good, that is to shorten Controversies and bring our Disputes to a period; also the method of Discoursing being (as Logick tells us) one of the *præcognoscenda* to the Discourse it self, and so either Disputant has right to re-

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quire it should be first treated of, though I civilly *requested* it of you : Lastly, it being so indifferently fram'd to your or my interest, or rather totally for his who had Truth or Grounds on his side; that is, for you, were your cause so qualify'd; and, as such, equally lik't by Judicious Protestants as well as Catholicks: This being so, that you should so totally sleight and disregard it in these circumstances, is a clear argument you think it not safe to venture your cause and Credit upon Principles or any Evident or Conclusive method of discoursing; and a plain Confession by way of Fact that all your discourse against my Book has neither *Principles* to subsist by, nor *Evidence* to conclude by. Which acknowledgment of yours though *tacitly* and *modestly* exprest (for you are a *modest* man in all your *rationall* performances, and onely very brag and brisk when some jest haunts your fancy or when you are dispos'd to flout and rail at the *impudence* of my assertions) is as high a favour as your great wit could have invented; and so I am bound to yeeld you a return of Infinit Thanks for it; which I beseech you accept in part of requitall, till I come to show hereafter out of the nature of that Letter that all your Probable talk in this Book had been marr'd in case you had yeelded to dome the reason which I there requested

3. Next I am to thank you heartily that you begin your Impugnation with the most disingenu-

ous Cavill that perhaps has ever been heard of Intending to frame my discourse as plain and unexceptionable as I could concerning the Rule of Faith, I declared (page 4.) that I intended *not rigorous definitions of either word, but onely to reflect on and make use of some Attributes, Predicates or Properties, which in the sence of such who intelligently use those words, are apprehended to bee involved in or truly appertaining to their signification,* I added that I gave that caution to avoid mistake and Cavill: which might ensue upon pretence of defining, but could not upon meerly predicating, so my propositions were true: This done, I begun with the plainest sayings I could use, and thence drew on the process of my discourse by the most immediate steps I could invent. The tenour of my First discourse was thus: A Rule signifies a thing which is able to regulate him who uses it, therefore it must have in it those Qualities by which 'tis able to do that it's proper Effect; therefore it must bee knowable as to it's existence to the Persons it is to regulate; as also, it must be knowable to have in it a vertue to regulate or guide them right. Again, the word *Faith* being Equivocall, and sometimes taken for Conscience, sometimes for a strong Trust or Reliance, sometimes for Fidelity or Honesty &c. I had a mind to restrain it to our present purpose as it is taken for an Assent of the understanding upon Authority; and, so, exprest my self p. 8. that, *Faith is the same*

same with beleevings; thence I affirm'd something of *Divine Beleeif*, as much as would bring me to evince this that *Faith* in a Christian Sence imported *Knowledge of Supernaturall things*; which is all I aym'd at in this Branch of my discourse. So that I us'd all the art and care I could to avoid Cavil. But Sr, I perceive to my comfort your Distingenuity (which is one of your chief kindneses) is beyond all prevention. First, *you can by no means think my explication of those Terms sufficient* p. 1. you should have said *those affirmations true*, or, those Predicates, truely pronounc't of the subject; for this is all I aym'd at, and not to compile *Explications*. Next, you say, this proposition *A Rule is to regulate or guide him that uses it, is a Discription*; which I beseech you beleeve was never intended. Afterwards you complain *I confound Rule and Guide, by making regulating and guiding equivalent*; and I defend my self, that those words being vulgarly confounded may without wronging Art be us'd so till wee have occasion to distinguish them, which I have no where in my whole book: Nor had I blam'd Mr. *Whitby* for this but thar in the very discourse where he profess't to distinguish *Rule* from *Guide*, he notwithstanding, even there confounded their notions. Were I to distinguish them, I should (if you would not be angry) put this difference between them, that *Guide* hath something Personall in its signification, which *Rule* abstracts from. But you proceed

with your *kindnesses*; and (pag. 2.) call those words my *definition*; though (so unparallelld is your candor) you quote my words a little after that I intended here no definitions: and then shew my *definition* (forsooth) Faulty, because I tell Englishmen *for their clearer understanding* this word, that tis a *Thing able to regulate* &c. whereas *regulate is less removed from the Latin* & so, less plain then *Rule* the word defined. Whereas your self know I meant not to define; and I beseech you beleeve mee when I tell you I as little meant to write to any English-men that did not understand the word *Regulate* as well as the word *Rule*. Yet I must *define* whether I will or no, though there be no other occasion why it should be so but onely that you might break a jest, which tickled your Fancy, and so your fingers itcht to put it down; 'Tis a Definition of your own parallell to my counterfeited one, that a *Law-giver is one that hath the power of Legislation*; And in this you have hit right; for tis just such another definition as mine was.

4. After this you bring in my other Definition (as you call it) that *Faith is the same with beleeving*, and immediatly add my words disowning any sayings of mine in this first discourse to be *definitions* at all, as had you transcrib'd a little farther you might have let the Reader see more visibly. And, so kind you are, that my very not-intending to define which is alone able, one would think, to excuse all the pretended faults

faults in my mistaken definitions must have a little touch of a Cavill notwithstanding from that fertil wit of yours, which minds not desert nor misdesert, but follows it's own Genius, & indifferently pours out it self meerly to vent its exuberancy. Now the reason why those words *Faith is the same with beleiving* must needs be a Definition too, is Evident: you had another witty conceit came into your Fancy, which was a Country-fellows Definition, saying that *an Invasion was as if hee should say an Invasion*; which would not have fitted, unless you had made my words *Faith is the same Beleiving* a definition too; and it had been a thousand pitties such a pretty jest shoul'd have been lost. But, Sr. since I ment to bring my notion from a more Equivocall to a less Equivocall word, & thence proceeded (as you call it) defining a great way farther, that is indeed *predicating* or *affirming* diverse other things in that ϕ . why you should catch at my very first words, *Faith is the same with beleiving*, and make that alone a *Definition*, neglecting all the following ones, is impossible for such dull heads as mine to divine; unless it were that the Country-definition had a very great Ascendent and Influence over your Conscience and Sincerity as well as your Fancy.

5. This definition of mine (to see how things will come about) *puts you in mind* (p. 3.) of my *First Principles*, *a Rule is a Rule*, *Faith is Faith*. Upon which you triumph thus, *This is*
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the right self-evident method hee talks so much of; and his Principles agree admirably well with his definitions. If hee had proceeded in the same method, and added that a Rule of Faith is a Rule of Faith, Orall Tradition is Orall Tradition, and that to say Orall Tradition is the Rule of Faith is as much as to say Orall Tradition is the Rule of Faith, the whole business had been concluded without any more ado, and I think no body would have gone about to confute him. What a terrible thing it is to deal with your great Wits ! Let's see how a little honest plain Logick will dissipate this vapour. To *Conclude* is to show evidently that two notions wee call the Subject and Predicate are identify'd or connected in that Proposition we call the Conclusion. To do this wee find a Third notion, call'd a *medium* or Argument to bee identify'd with those two, whence wee infer them to be the same : but how shall wee know that third notion to bee identify'd with those two others, that is, how shall wee know the *major* and *minor* propositions to bee true ? By finding another *medium* connected with them : And how far must this go on ? Endlessly, or no ? If endlessly, since every following Connexion is prov'd by some foregoing ones, in case wee cannot come to see some *First* Connexion or Principle, wee could conclude or deduce nothing. And how must we evidence the Connexion of the Terms (or of the Subject and Predicate) in these *First* Principles ? By another antecedent connexion

of those Terms with a Third? No; for these are suppos'd the *First* Connexions. Wherefore, since they cannot be evidenc't by any thing out of themselves and yet must be Evident, else nothing could bee evidenc't by them, it follows they must bee Evident of themselves or *self-Evident*. And in what consists this Self Evidence? meerly in this that no *medium*, middle Term or Argument can come between the notions of their Subject and Predicate; which devolves finally into this, that the Subject and Predicate are perfectly the same notion: So that all *Science* about any thing is finally resolv'd into the nature or *Essence* of that thing, that is into that things *being what it is*, or which is all one it's being *the same with its self*, which your great Learning laughs at. Hence, *what is, is*; or *Every thing is what it is*, as plain and course as it looks, is the last resort of all Evidence in the world; and, in particular Sciences, that the Subject of that Science is what it is; *as that man is a Man, Quantity is Quantity*, and so, *a Rule is a Rule, Faith is Faith*, must principle all that can bee solidly concluded either about *Man, Quantity, Rule or Faith*.

6. Had you reflected on any maxims of Art, and not stood pursuing your affected buffonerie when it became you to discourse like a solid Scholler, you would have seen how little ground you had for your taunting non-sence. To say that a *Rule is a Rule* is a First Principle, had

had not been held a just occasion of giggling, much less had you been so indiscreet as to parallell my Conclusion *Orall Tradition is the Rule of Faith* with my Principle *A Rule is a Rule*; or to put it upon mee that because I make my Terms in my Principle self-evidently Identically, therefore I ought to do so in my Conclusion too; whereas your Conscience tells you and my whole Book informs the Reader I go about at least to prove it in so rigorous a method that as you fear to admit, and so wave speaking to my Letter, so you and your fellow Probable-Christians judge it your best play to laugh at it. And 'tis a cheap way if you had a Fool to deal with who would let such weak evasions serve your turn.

But let mee sum up my obligations to you at present. You have manifestly falsify'd my Intention: pretending I mean't to *define*, whereas I expressly disown'd it, *Sure Footing* p. 4. You omit to answer whether those *Propositions* or *Predications* of mine bee *true* or *false*; and, if true, whether my *Consequences* bee right or no; which was all your task at present: you lay the gull you have rais'd for your Ground, and thereupon cavill and flout all the way without sense, reason, or the least occasion: You laugh at the nature of *First Principles*, bewraying either your Ignorance of those things on which all solid Discourse can onely bee built, or your Necessity of scorning such unfriendly

friendly Discoverers of your weaknels: &, which is the worst of all, you make this unfavoury kind of Talk, the first part of your Onset, and the first tast you give your Reader of your Sincerity and depth of Reasoning. And now, Sir, bee Judge your self, whether the confessing your self thus amply to bee a disingenuous and weak Caviller, bee not strangely obliging to your thankfull Servant. Really, Sir, unless you will bee so good as to take the telling you candidly of your Faults to bee sufficient Payment, I am exceedingly afraid I shall live and dy in your debt. I could make good sport with the word *measure* in your definition (for you will *define* to excell mee though none requires it of you) but I dare not imitate you, nor pretend to so great a degree of witty and pleasant Eloquence. Onely I will beg leave to transcribe your words which introduce your definitions *p. 4. Rejecting then his way of definition as inept and frivolous, and no wayes tending to give a clearer notion of things, I shall endeavour to explain a little better (if I can) the meaning of these Terms.* And certainly, Sir, a man may with a little Astrology prognosticate your victory; for you combat nothing but a *Chimera* your own brain had coin'd. In the mean time 'tis another small *Kindness* to show your self so vain as to build your own triumphs on a voluntary misprision.

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But right or wrong you are resolv'd to conquer, and I must have patience.

7. I hop't when I came to your second Section your *Reason* which as your Friend Mr. *Stillingfleet* (who hummes your Book as loud as you can do his for your heart) tells us *runs throughout your Book*, would have given some respite to your Kindnesses, and my Thanks for them; but I discern in this and your following Section that your very *Reason* it self is compounded of *Kindness*, and that your soberest impugnation of my discourse is made up of Groundless Cavills and (which I am loath to say) voluntary mistakes. I am sorry to see it, because I intended to throw aside the rubbish of your Book in this Letter, that in my Answer I might better lay open the admirable Fabrick of your Discourse, and have nothing there to do but to speak to solid points. But in this disappointment I must behave my self as well as I can, and your Goodness must help mee out by pardoning me if I omit to thank you for innumerable Kindnesses which are involv'd in your Rational performances, till God gives me health and leasure.

8. You are pleas'd to honour me with a very loud and heavy Calumny all over your Book, as reviling Scripture, vilifying, disgracing it, and what not. Now, Sr, I use still to distinguish in Scripture the *Sence* of it from the *Outward Letter*, which distinction if you admit not, I have no
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more to do but to alledge experience confest by all, that many Sects who have the outward Letter inform it with different Sences; which evidently argues a Divisibility or Distinction between that *Letter* and it's *Sence*. Admitting then this Distinction, and that the *Sence* of words is the Soul of, them, I cannot allow that Letter with any propriety to be called *Gods word*, unless inform'd and enlivened with Gods *Sence*; but onely *dead* Characters; for sincerely, Sr, I never saw a Bible creep about and move it self that I should call it, that is, the paper and characters, *Living*. Now, taking those *Letters* in complexion with *Gods Sence*, and, as inform'd by it, I challenge your utmost spight which most of your book, especially the end of this Section, shows to be very bitter against me, whether you ever read any man give a higher respect to those Oracles then my self. See my words *Sure-Footing* p. 40. & 146. which you might have had the Candour to acknowledge. And as for the Author of Rushworths Dialogues whom you accuse of the same crimes I know not whether you will take my word or no, but I assure those who will, that when on occasion I was moving him to write a Comment on the Books of the New Testament, he shook his head and reply'd! *Ab*, Sr, *do you know what you ask? They are so full of profound heavenly sence, that 'tis beyond the wit of man to declare it without injuring it; assuring me it was to sublime a task and required*
such

such perfection of Science especially Divinity, that he durst not undertake it. I challenge you therefore as you hope to bee held an honest man, to show mee any one expression in all my writings, where I speak of the Letter of Scripture in Complexion with it's Sence, (which onely is truly Gods word); otherwise then with highest reverence; nay of that very Letter as manag'd by any method of arriving at a Certain and determinate Sence of it but with respect. For otherwise the meer Letter of Scripture quoted by the Devill and taken in his sence is the *Devills Word*, not *Gods*, and for the same reason the same Letter cited by you to signify *your Sence* is *your Word*, (though you tell your Auditors boldly that all is *Gods Word* you talk out of the Pulpit) unless you first make Evident you adhere to a Certain method of interpreting it right, which you shall never evince; nay Certainer & Solider then is the living Voice and Practice of the Church Essentiall, which you so laugh at, and would perswade your Readers to renounce and disbelieve it to adhere to your Grammatical Quibbling & Criticisms. So that all your anger at us in reality springs hence that we will, not let *Tour Word* bee taken for *Gods*, and honour'd (forsooth) and reverenc't with a sacred and Divine veneration. Hence all this heat and foam of ill language. And, good reason, for this one point of not permitting your private Interpretations of Scripture that is *your Word* to be held *Gods*, so deeply concerns

cerns your Copy-hold, that, if this cheat bee once discover'd, your self, all the Books you write, nay all your whole Profession signifies just nothing. This short and plain Discourse once understood by our Readers, as I hope it will, your fierce Calumny against mee as a Blasphemous person devolves to this that you venerate your own Talent or Fancy in fencing the Letter of Scripture as a most Sacred thing, nay place it in stead of the Holy Ghost who first dictated that Sence to the Divine Writers. And can you do mee a greater Kindness than to discover this, and bee so highly concern'd for it?

9. You tell the Reader p. 13. that *whatever I attribute to Scripture for fashion's sake, or (say you) to avoid Calumny with the vulgar, as hee sayes very ingeniously in this Explication of the 15th. Corollary; nevertheless 'tis plain that according to his own Hypothesis, hee cannot but look upon it as perfectly useles and pernicious.* By which words you would make mee acknowledge I attribute nothing to Scripture but to *avoid Calumny with the vulgar*: whereas in the place you cite there is no such matter; but only that some of our Controvertists (not I) condescended to the Protestants *sleight-way* of quibbling out of Scripture, lest they should calumniate them to desert Scripture it self. But this is your usuall sincerity.

10. You quoted (after you have discours't as if there could bee no use of Scripture besides

making it *the Rule of Faith*) And that it is intolerably pernicious according to his Hypothesis is plain, because every silly upstart heresy fathers it self upon it ; and then quote for these words *Sure-footing*. p. 40. But look there and one may read , I speak of Scripture only as ill-manag'd by you ; that is, putting it without any distinction of the Persons in the peoples hands, and leaving it to their Interpretation to make use of it for a Rule of Faith. Now , if Scripture as mis-manag'd bear the same notion with Scripture it self, then you have dealt very honestly , and done mee no Kindness in falsifying my intentions evident from my words in that very place , and inveighing against mee accordingly. As for your next citation , that *Scripture-words, not sent, nor having any certain Interpreter* (under which notion I expresse my self to take them) are waxen-natur'd, that is, applicable to diverse senses , 'tis so beat out by manifest experience, that 'tis beyond Cavill to confute it ; and the very Disputes between *John Biddle* and the Protestants is sufficient to evince it. But your Candour is pleased to confound Scripture's Letter taken as *unsent* , with the same Letter taken as *God's Word* ; and that Letter as taken without any Certain Interpreter , with the same Letter as certainly interpreted, and then who so abominable miscreants as the poor Papists ; who must bee forc't to say , not what themselves in reality

lity say, but what their disingenuous (though even therein *kind* Adversaries) will needs have them say.

II. Your third Section tells us that you are much puzzled for Instances of Traditions Followers differing in Faith; and you are so put to it that you cannot I mean (you will not) distinguish between the Head of our Church acting as a Definer of Faith or Proceeder upon Tradition, and acting as a prudent Governour. Please then to take notice how this Affair of Censuring Books is manag'd. Diverse Books, perhaps of twenty severall Authors are order'd to bee read over by some Divines, and their Judgments concerning them to bee given in, which they do: The Chief Officers of the Church perhaps have twenty other things to handle that very day; and Themselves have neither leasure to peruse the Books, nor discuss the Propositions; which coming clad in a Theologicall dress would in Prudence require a great deal of deliberation ere any of them were expressly and particularly to bee declar'd against with it's peculiar Censure. All that the nature of their Circumstances permits them to do is to trust those Divines, and to proceed accordingly, to warn the Faithfull to beware of those Books, in which they are inform'd there is such danger. So that the motive those Governours proceed upon is their care of preserving the Faithfull untainted, and the Judgment of Divines, not Chri-

stian Tradition. And, what motive proceed those Divines upon in these Censures? Upon their best skill as Divines; that is their best skill in drawing Consequences; in which neither themselves nor any else say they are Infallible; Thus much for the Censurers. Now come wee to the Person censur'd and his Books. Of what nature are they? Theologicall Discourses. And what do such Discourses rely on formally? On Tradition? Nothing less: On this hee rely'd as a *Beleever* or Christian, not as a *Divine*, but on his own humane skill in explicating Faith or it's Ground, and his talent in deducing right Consequences, in which also hee and every man Living is Fallible: You see, Sir, by this time the ripe fruits of your performance in this point, and that you have brought a worthy Instance of Difference amongst Reliers on Tradition, in a passage wherein neither side rely on Tradition Oh, but they contradict one another in the very point of Tradition: 'Tis your weak and unproud conjecture; and besides you cannot (I mean still, will not) distinguish between the *Substance* of Tradition (that is the Infallibility of the Living Voice and Practice of the Church Essentiall in conveying down uninterruptedly Christ's Doctrine) and the *Explication* of it; show the Church of *Rome* condemns the former and you have my free Confession I am at a loss for my Faith. But, though you show shee condemns and censures all the later, that is all the

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Explications whether made by that Authour, myself, or any other, yet, as long as she condemns not the former, shee hath done nothing against Tradition; and so your wise Instance is spoil'd, as it was no other likely, being the weakest you could have invented against Tradition, and the least concerning it; in regard there is not one learned Catholick in the Church that looks upon the Acts of the Roman Inquisition in Censuring Books, as on Infallible Definitions of Faith.

12. You'l ask, where lies the Fault in such cases? I answer, no where that I know; not in the Head of the Church, who acted the most prudently and carefully that could be in such an affair; neither censuring any particular Proposition, where there was no more Certainty to ground that Censure, than the Judgment of some Divines; and yet providing by the Caution his censure imported that the conceived harmfulness in those Books might work no ill Effects: whence 'tis but an invidious presumption of your own, that *perhaps the Pope is censur'd for it in England*. Nor, were those Roman Divines Faulty in case they judg'd *secundum ultimum potentiae*; but were bound in conscience to give in to the Court what they thought. Again, those *Explications* of Divinity-points looking new to them, and it being the naturall Genius of the Followers of Tradition to bee jealous of any thing that is new, and this not onely in Faith but also

in Explications of Faith, in regard these pretend a coherence and connexion with Faith it self, it seems to mee to sound a laudable zeal both in them and others to bee suspicious of and less a Friend at First to what's *new*, 'till it bee *farther lookt into* and appear innocent. Nor can I say 'tis a Fault in the person censur'd, in case hee sincerely ment to write what he judg'd was truth and so most advantageous to the Church, and submits to the Orders of his Chief Ecclesiasticall Superiour. You see, Sir, the whole case: in which I am larger because you are *kinder* here than ordinary; and, your Instance falling pittifully short, you peece it out with Falshoods (p. 22.) that *wee in England censure perhaps the Pope* for this Action; that the person censur'd *disobeyes* the *Summons of his Chief Pastour*; that p. 24. *the Governours of the Church do professedly cherish Ignorance in the Generality of the Papists for the increasing their devotion.* These are grear favours indeed: you are too liberall, Sir, and will undo your self unless you restrain your hand from this profuseness of *kindness*.

Your 4th. Section is all *Reason*, & (like the foregoing one in which you laid your grounds and fell to build) so strong and firm that it needs more than an ordinary blast to blow it down. Therefore I conceive 'tis best to stay a while and gain more breath, which is something short with mee at present.

13. But your fifth even kills me with *Kind-*
nes,

ness, and acquaints the Reader with a dangerous oversight of mine enough to overthrow my whole Book. 'Tis this, that I make Traditions Certainty a *First and self-evident Principle*, and yet go about to demonstrate it; which you soberly admonish mee to take heed how I take it upon me; that *Aristotle never demonstrated First Principles, because they could not bee demonstrated*; that *most prudent men are of Opinion that a self-evident principle, of all things in the world, should not bee demonstrated, because it needs not*; you ask, to what end should a man write a Book to proove that, which every man must assent to without proof so soon as 'tis propounded to him &c. Now, Sr, in my mind you should onely have combated this, and have given no other Answer to my whole Book but to this onely: for nothing can bee so senceless nor so impertinent as to go about to proove that which that which can need no proof, nor consequently less meriting an Answer. I would then, had I been in your case, have thought it my best and most honourable play, to omit all counterfeittings of my Adversaries defining, all those multitudes of groundless Cavills, voluntary mistakes, Calumnies, laughing at his First Principles, Evidence, demonstration, &c. together with all my wordish exceptions at his *rumbling Rethorick*, *perching upon the nature of things*, and other such expressions; and have solely apply'd my self to this one Folly

evacuating his whole Book and so excusing my Answer ; And this you might have done with far greater hopes of conquering than in any of the rest ; because , that a *First* and self-evident Principle cannot bee evidenc't seems so clear that it even looks like a *First Principle* it self , of which no other part of your confutation has the least Countenance or resemblance : And be assur'd , Sr , since you would not use this advantage against mee as you might , you shall never have mee upon the like lock again.

Caught in these streights by your entangling Logick I endeavour my escape on this manner. *Self-evidence* is two-fold, *Speculative* and *Practicall*. *Speculative self-evidence* is that which cannot bee *made Evident* by any Speculation or Skill , but is known meerly by the common light of understanding : such is that which is found in those Principles I discours'd of before , which were therefore Self-evident speculatively because, their Subject and Predicate being the very same notion , no other middle notion could come between them , by connexion with which they might bee shown connected with one another : You remember them I suppose ; it was they that made you and your Friends such sport in your Book. *Practicall Self-evidence* is that which wee are not thus imbu'd with by nature through the common light of Understanding , nor yet is it acquir'd by rationall Discourses , (for this is *Evidence by-deduction* , not *Self-evidence*)

dence) but that which is stoln into us as it were at unawares by a common converse with things in this world , which all mankind in a manner even those who are very rude are acquainted with. Examples of the former are (if you have done laughing) *A Rule is a Rule, Faith is Faith* , also *A whole (or a part and more) is more than a part ; or, is a part and more* . Examples of the later , for your better satisfaction , I propose three or four. One shall bee that in a square space 'tis a neerer way to go from one corner to that which is opposite , by the Diameter , than to go by the two sides. Another shall bee that , things look less afar off and bigger neerer-hand. A third shall bee that (abstracting from madness) 'tis impossible Mr. T. or any other such (you see how kind I am to you) should take for his Text *The Fool hath said in his heart there is no God* , and at the same time, and in the same circumstances things stand now in *England* , should preach Atheism and endeavour to perswade them out of that very Text, *there is no God* . The last shall bee the Existence of *Q. Elizabeth* or *K. Henry* the 8th. Now I affirm that all these are *Practically-self-evident* : for it was not by virtue of Speculative discourses the vulgar arriv'd to the Knowledge of these and such like things (as is evident by this that they know not how to prove these , or give an account of their assent by way of evident discourse) but by virtue of the common know-
ledges

ledges of things in the world they are acquainted with. Now what is thus *self-evident* is so far from being impossible to bee evidenc't Speculatively, that 'tis the proper task of *Learned men* (by which I mean not those tedious mighty men of Talk, who think it an excellent confutation of Sence to cavill at words and Expressions) to look into Nature, and discover or (if you bee not offended) *demonstrate* what were the proper Causes which wrought thus, after a naturall manner, that Effect call'd *Certainty* in rationall Souls as to all the aforesaid particulars; which found, they will appear to bee the *mediums* fit to demonstrate that Effect. That this is so in the two first Examples, you are so well skilled in *Euclid*, & the mathematicks (though one Prophet T. say's I have not read him) as to know that notwithstanding this Practical-self-evidence all mankind has of them, Mathematicians notwithstanding go about to demonstrate them speculatively without fearing to do a *needleless* action, out of the nature of Quantity; as I make account I could demonstrate the 4th. & the 3d. too out of the nature of *Man*, or out of this (if you please) that a *man is a man* or a rationall Creature, that is a Thing that acts not, if hee have the use of Reason, without a motive.

To come nearer home, I concieve that 'tis to all unprejudic't and unpreoccupied Understandings, as are all Catholikes who have not their

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their Faith from skill but by the naturall way of Education. *Self-evident Practically*; that the Doctrine deliver'd now as taught by Christ and his Apostles, by such as profess to have it by way of Tradition or uninterrupted Succession from them, is truly their Doctrine; or, that the Certainty of Traditions conveying down matters of Fact is practically-self-evident; and thence I proceed to look speculatively into the Causes of such an Assurance, and so demonstrate it. Which when I go about, I discover that, besides what ascertain'd Humane Tradition in witnessing the Existence of *Henry* the 8th. or any other matter of Fact, infinite Advantages were found in Christian Tradition enabling it to bring down the first-preach't Doctrine above what was found in them. But I expatiate too far.

I hope by this, Sir, you see at length what my whole Book ayms at; though (good man) you were so taken up with cavilling at little wordish Exceptions you spy'd it nor before; that is, to demonstrate by way of *speculation* what I conceiv'd before to be *self-evident practically*; you see also at the same time how infinitely you oblige mee by professing your Ignorance of this point; for in so doing you profess withall that you are utterly Ignorant of what my whole Book meant. And, are not you rarely qualify'd to be an Impugner of my Book, who are so perfectly to seek in knowing what's the main end it drives at? Is it not evident
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hence that your endeavours to confute mee can never go to the bottom of the difficulty, but onely talk superficially, that is wordily and withall mistakingly to some passages in it? Surely, plain reason tells us in every ordinary affair that if one man understands not the main end the other aims at, however hee may talk prettily and expresse himself in good language, yet hee can never speak home and to the purpose. And as this is plain *à priori* from it's proper Cause, your Ignorance of my main intent, so you have abundantly demonstrated the same *à posteriori* in your whole Book; which no where (as I hope to show you hereafter) begins at the bottom; but is wholly made up of a great many airy gay prettinesses, such as best befits one who mocks at *Evidence* and *Demonstration*. But 'tis no matter your Friend Mr. *Stillingsfleet* will extoll you for it the more, and the Generality of your party, who are accustomed and educated by you to loose sermonary Discourses will like it the better; whereas, had you profest the way of Evidence, you had been character'd by him as *monstrously opinionated* of your self, and that kind of Readers, your onely admirers, would not have understood you.

14. Your second Part treats about the *Properties of the Rule of Faith*, and whether they agree solely to *Orall Tradition*. I assign'd seven; of which you are pleas'd to mistake quite no
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fewer than *all*. But I must not here take notice too much of your *Reason*, but of your *Kindnesses* contradicting by your Friend Mr. *Stillingsfleet* to your *Reasons*, that is, which are *Irrationall*.

You tell mee p. 57. that *I might have learn'd something from the same Author from whom I borrow'd my Chief Properties of the Rule of Faith, if I had but had the patience to have consider'd his Explication of them*. Surely, learned Sir, you have great skill in Judiciary Astrology; or else you deal with *Lilly*, and *Booker*; or perhaps have an enchanted Glass which discovers to you all I do in my study. For you know exactly all I do there; nay which is yet more wonderfull, all I do not. You know better than my self I never use to read the Fathers; you can pronounce fearlessly that I never read *Euclid*, and here you can tell to a hair where I borrow'd my *Chief Properties of the Rule of Faith*, and that it was *Dr. Holden's Analysis*. What *Mephistophilus* reveals these secrets to you? But, Sir, I beg your pardon; I will not put this gift of yours upon such a score: you are a Divine, and so no doubt know these things by the Spirit of Prophecy; nor am I a little proud to know that so great a Prophet is so near related to mee by his Friendship and Kindnesses. But, Sir, take heed; even holy men and Prophets themselves have been deceiv'd sometimes. I need not quote Scripture to you, how a certain person offer'd to be a *lying Spirit in the mouth even of Prophets*;
and

and as for your present Prophecy I do faithfully assure you that I never read a leaf in *Dr. Holden's Analysis* in my life; nor knew, till your Book told mee it, hee treated at all of *the Properties of the Rule of Faith*. The occasion of this neglect was that I was told hee went the way of *Rushworth's Dialogues*, which I made account I comprehended sufficiently, and so minded not to peruse it. You see, Sir, what you gain by being *personally affrontive*; which you exceedingly affect in your Book to mee and others; and so studiously endeavour it that to find occasions for it, you stick not to say the most false and unjustifiable things rather than not humour that Infirmary of your Will. Now your *Kindness* in this particular carriage consists in this, that you discover plainly a resolution to cavill though you engage your self by that means to affect things which may easily bee false, and which 'tis impossible for you to prove or justify were they true; which signifies you are neither too civill, over honest, nor endow'd with any exceeding proportion of Prudence. But Mr. *Stillingfleet* likes you never the less for it, and perhaps will proclaim your praises the louder for your victory, however achiev'd by Stratagem. *Dolus an virtus.* ---

15. You are pleas'd p. 60. to Cavill that the words *absolutely ascertainable to us* (are as you who are master of Language, and so may say any thing, deliver your self) *most contradictory-*

ly exprest. And why? because they import,
with respect to us, without respect to us: As if
it were such an unheard of thing that the word
absolutely should oftentimes signify *perfectly*, as
when wee say *absolutely good* an *absolute Work-*
man, Scholar, &c. And then I beseech you
inform mee what Contradiction there is in
saying the Rule of Faith is *perfectly ascertainable*
to us. Besides you should as well have plac't the
contradictiō in the words *absolutely ascertainable*.
For if it bee once sence that it is *absolutely ascer-*
tainable, it cannot bee ill to adde *to us*; for the
word *ascertainable* implies a respect to some or
other. On this occasion (that I may not trouble
my Reader often with such nitty Exceptions,
with which your Book abounds) it were not
amiss to reflect how industriously your friend
Mr. *Stillingsfleet* and you, who, as 'tis most fit,
eccho mutuall praises to one another, affect and
pursue such empty cavills; any misplac't word
whether it happen through the Compositors let-
ting it in, in a wrong place, or printing it when not
sufficiently blotted out in the originall; any less
propriety in an expression, occasion'd by the haste
I was in when I writ my Appendix against him;
which was sent to the press in loose Quarters of
sheets; any Metaphor which light unsutable to
your Cavilling Genius, as that of *perching*,
which makes your self verry jollyly merry; any
pretended degree of obscurity in a word, as that
of *Regulate* in stead of *Rule*; any expression that
sounds

sounds not roundly and tersely Rhetoricall, in a book in which I meant no Rhetorick at all : These and divers others such wordish Faults or no Faults, ('tis all one with you) are judg'd mighty pieces of ignorance according to the genius of such airy kind of Schollarship; and great Triumphs made upon them. Whereas I should rather wish to combat the inward meaning and sence of a discourse than it's outward dress or manner of expression, provided the manner of expressing wrong not that sence. Hence I except mainly against the Titles of *Mr. Stillingfleets* and *Mr. Tillotsons* books : It being both highly improper and abusive of the signification of words to call that a *Rule* which is Confessedly possible to be *False*, that is which possibly has no power in it to rule at all; and equally absurd to call that a *Rationall Account* of any thing which is built on no First, that is *Self-evident* Principle, without which no *rationall discourse* can subsist nor Conclusion bee deduc't, as I shewd lately p 5. Unless perhaps *Mr. Stillingfleet* takes *Rationall* as wee use the word *reasonable* when wee say a thing is *reasonable strong*, that is wee hope it will hold, but yet wee see not but it may break. This is *my* way of excepting; but were *Mr. Tillotson* to work upon the word *Rationall* 'tis good luck hee is *Mr. Stillingfleets* dedicated and dedicating friend, for otherwise tis forty to one he would have about with him. And first he would have called the

the Title of his Book, his *Definition* of it; and then have fal'n foul with him for setting forth a Book to *Englishmen* and using the word *Rational* which was *neerer the Latin*, instead of the word *Reasonable* which was plain English, and so more intelligible to his Readers.

But enough of these Fooleries; 'tis now high time I return to my Friend and his Kindnesses. Your present one, Sir, (which I acknowledge common to you and your Friend, and you ought to applaud one another for it) consists in this: that by your magnifying and frequently insisting upon exceptions against my words, not upon a *Logical* score, because they are Equivocall or injure the Sence wee are discussing, but upon a *Grammaticall*, or *Rhetoricall*, that is a *Superficial* account in which the point under debate is no way concern'd, is a very hearty acknowledgment to your Reader that you value the airy gingling of words more than the solid substance of Sence; which discovers you, how much soever you have read, noted and scribled: to bee very Empty of true Learning or Science: This is a *reall Kindness*, Sir, and I humbly thank you both for it.

Your second Section and some following ones for the main part of them speak nothing but pure *Reason*; I mean in your way, that is sophistically and knowingly deforming every passage you meet with. Yet to do you right you speak a great Truth in the beginning of
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your § 4. p. 65. when you say, *And thus I might trace him through all the Properties of the Rule of Faith*; for nothing is more Certain than that. Thus, that is, handling things as you do, one may do any thing, nay even write a Book against the First Principles themselves. The Rule of Faith being confessedly the *means to arrive at the Points of Faith*, and the *Sence* or *meaning* of Scripture being the *Points of Faith*, it follows unavoidably that the Protestants must say (if they will speak *sence*) that the Rule of Faith must be the *means* to bring them to the *Sence* or *meaning* of Scripture; for which, according to them, the *Letter* of Scripture as *significative*, being sufficient, 'tis consequent they can onely mean by *Rule of Faith* the *Letter* of Scripture as *significative of God's Sence* or *Points of Faith*. I beseech you, Sir, what say you to this Discourse? Do you answer it, or show that, if you take Scripture in any other *Sence* for Rule of Faith than as thus consider'd, you do not confound the *Rule of Faith* with the *Points of Faith*? Not a jot. Nor is it your fashion to speak to my Reasons, or Consequences. Thus you answer'd my First Discourse, the most solid and most Fundamentall part of my Book? Deforming the plain sayings I built on for *Definitions*, denying my conclusions in a following Section, and saying something against them; but not a word I can find any where against the Proofs which inferr'd them, deduc't at large there for

14. ϕ . ϕ . together; that is from ϕ 2. to the end. Your way of answering is generally when you are gravell'd with the Reason, to bring some ridiculous Parallell, then laugh heartily and mock at that, and so discountenance the other. But here to do you right, you bring two very good ones, but the comfort is you understood them not to bee such, else wee should not have had them; which you put a little oddly and then triumph, and think your self victorious. Pray Sir, lend me your Parallells a while to manage. The first of them is found p. 62. concerning which I thus discourse. Taking the *Statute-book* for the *means* to convey to us the *Sence* of that Book or the *Laws*, I must still say you cannot mean by *Statute-book* the *Sence* of that Book or the *Laws*, that is that Book as conjoyn'd with it's *Sence*, for so it would signify that the *same* Thing is a *means* to it self, that is, is *before* and *after* it self: you must onely mean then by *Statute-book*, thus consider'd, the *Letter* of that book as yet unsenc't, or contradistinguisht from the same book *as conjoyn'd with its sence*; that is, the *Letter* of that Book *as Significative*. Thus I conceive it perfectly parallell to mine, and with all very rationall. But you make it amount to this p. 62. l. 13. *That a Book cannot convey to a man the Knowledge of any matter, because if it did it would convey to him the Thing to bee known.* The later part of which is true though I percieve you know it not; for these words [*Knowledge of a*

matter] involves in their signification [*the thing Known*] as if you reflect on your own words, *Matter* and *Thing*, you will quickly discover. But the Sophistry lies in this, that when you say, *a Book cannot convey*, &c. you equivocate in the word *Book*, which I contend must either be taken for the *Letter* of it *in conjunction with the Sence* which is the *thing known*, and then it cannot thus accepted, bee a means of arriving at the *Knowledge* of the *Thing* or the *Thing* as known, for then it would signify as much as if one should say, *the Letter with the thing known is the means of arriving at the thing known*; or else, it must bee taken for the *Letter* as *Significative* onely, or *without* the *Sence*, and so it may bee conceiv'd a way of arriving at that *Sence* 'tis judg'd *apt to signify*. But, Sir, your contending here against a thing so Evident has a great deal of reason for it; you would have the outward *Letter* of Scripture confounded with the *Sence* of it, that those who hear you quote the *Letter*, may bee fool'd to imagine you have still the *Sence* too; whereas, should these bee known to bear distinction, it would bee very obvious to question whether you speak any thing of *God's Word*, or no, how much soever you have the outward *Letter* in your mouth and pen; Which reflexion alone if it were considerately weigh'd, would spoil all your *writing* and *preaching* too: For thus go your *First Principles*; The outward *Letter* lying in a book must first bee call'd *God's Word*,

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Word, and held so plain that it cannot bee misunderstood; and then the Sence you give it must needs bee held *God's Sence*; which politick Principles lay'd, I see not what you are inferior to those whom the Holy Ghost inspir'd; and your sayings are to have the same force, if the plot take, as the words of a Prophet or Evangelist. And who would not bee angry, fume and take on against a Discourse which is likely to de-vest you of so considerable and beneficiall a Prerogative?

Your second Parallell applies my Distinction concerning Scripture to Orall Tradition; for you have a speciall Faculty of your own in making men contradict themselves; thus you us'd a whole cluster of our Authours p. 119, 120. and as for poor mee, if you take mee understand I can scarce speak a word consonantly. Now, Sir, wee are thus far agreed, and better Friends than you took us to bee that I allow your Parallell to a tittle, and stick not at all to grant what you would force upon mee p. 63. that, *When I say Orall Tradition is the Rule of Faith, I can onely mean by Orall Tradition the Living Voice and Practice of the Church as apt to signify the Sence of Forefathers; and not the Sence, or those Points of Faith which they are apt to signify.* Alio that those *Words and Practices* taken formally as the *means* to know Points of Faith are contradistinguish't from that Sence, or those Points, and oppos'd to it relatively as a *means*

is oppos'd to an *End*; and therefore taken as consider'd in this abstraction and contradistinction as a *Means* to cause their actuall Sence in us, I say those Words and Practises are *without Sence*; in the same manner as a *Means*, taken formally for such, is without the *End*, and excludes it from it's notion. All this I voluntarily grant, and least you should conceit your strong Reason has brought mee to it, I let you know I ever took them so formerly: See *Sure-footing* p. 41. 2d. Edition (which I still intend to quote), *By Orall or Practicall Tradition wee mean a delivery down from hand to hand. (by Words and a constant course of frequent and visible Actions conformable to those Words) of the Sence and Faith of Forefathers.* Where you see I make *Sence* or *Faith* the *thing deliver'd*; and *Words* and *Actions* the *Way of delivering*: which therefore must needs exclude one another formally. Yet you think you have gotten a notable advantage against mee by this Parallell Discourse, telling your Reader p. 63. *When hee hath answer'd this Argument hee will have answer'd his own.* A shrewd Opponent! who confutes mee by putting mee to answer an Argument, thinking it would puzzle me grievously, which is my own express, and avow'd Doctrine. Is not this a strange mistake?

But, Sir, let me reflect on my Obligations. First you write a Book against Tradition, and yet discover plainly in this last mistake, you

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understand not in what I put Tradition to consist, that is you impugn, I *thank* you, you know not what. Wee are like to find a wise confutation of it when wee come to examin it's rationall part, which still misses in what's most substantiall and fundamentall. Next, you revile mee all over as abusing Scripture for *unsenc't*, or *without Sence* when wee speak of it as *your Rule of Faith*; and yet you see now wee speak the same of our own as to that point; which I am sure you think mee too highly venerate; and your mistake springs hence that (which is a shame for a Schollar, especially for one Mr. *Stillingfleet* so highly praises) you understand not the nature of *Abstraction*, and imagine and represent mee to say 'tis *devoid of sence*, *senceles without sence* &c. Which I no where affirm of it absolutely but as it's abstractedly consider'd as a *means* to arrive at *Sence*, and as *so taken* it must not bee conceiv'd as *having* that *Sence* which it's *a way to arrive at*. Once more for all (that I may clear your mistakes to you) know that wee make account there is the same reason for our Rule's being onely significative or a *way to Sence*, that is, as such *not-yet senc't*, as for yours: but wee put the difference here that wee make account *Living voice* and *Constant Practice* of the circumstant Faithfull or the Church Essentiall is by our perpetuall converse with them and other conveniencies so perfectly significative of their sence in deliver'd points or

points belonging to naturall Christianity, that they leave to the Generality no possible ambiguity or occasion of mistake; the persons being alive to explain themselves in any such Difficulty, if their carriage and Expressions could possibly leave any; whereas the Letter of Scripture as left to be interpreted by private heads, is given both by reason and Experience to bee diversly interpretable; and cannot by way of living voice apply it self pertinently to explain its own meaning when its sence is perverted by any; but lies at the mercy of the interpreters pretending to draw it into different faces, by alluding one place to another, Criticizing, and other fallible knacks. You make a great noise all over your Book as if wee would make God unable to write intelligibly; but you beg the question all the while, which is whether God intended the Scripture for a *Rule of Faith* or no; for if not, then why is it not as intelligible as it need bee? Again, the question is whether God intended it for every private man to interpret, or rather that they should *hear the Church* in that as well as in all things else belonging to Christianity: If he did, then They (not God) lead themselves into error though their Spirituall Pride, which makes them usurp the Churches Prerogative. But *Tuetullian* long ago has given you the best Answer (de Præscrip. Har. c. 39.) *Nec periclitator dicere ipsas quoque Scripturas sic esse ex Dei voluntate compositas ut hære*

hereticis materias subministrarent; cum legam oportere hereses esse quæ sine Scripturis esse non possunt. Nor am I affraid to say that the Scriptures themselves are so fram'd by the will of God that they should afford matter to Hereticks; for I read that there must bee Heresies, which without the Scriptures could not bee. I hope now you are satisfi'd that Tertullian is as great a Reviler of the Letter of Scripture as is your Friend I. S.

As for the point it self it needs no more to evince it to any except verball Cavillers, but this; That *Sence* is no where formally but in intelligent Things, that is, in our case onely in *mens minds*; nor can it bee otherwise in words then as in *Signes* that is *Significatively*. Since then I deny not but the protestants are to hold Scriptures Letter *Apt to signify* Gods Sence, as is seen *Sure-footing* p. 13. the very passage you cavil at, I wonder what you would have, or upon what Grounds you can require more.

You proceed as if you meant to overwhelm mee with your Favours; and tell the Reader p. 64. *it is pleasant to observe with what cross and untoward Arguments hee goes about to proove dead Characters not to have the Properties of a Rule of Faith.* May not one without danger of infidelity fear, Sir, that as some vessels give every thing that comes into them a tincture of the ill sent with which they are imbu'd; so every thing that passes into your Fancy grows
cross

cross and *untoward* by a predominancy of those Qualities there? You will give the Reader a *tast* or two you say, but the artificiall sawce you adde to it will bee found to alter quite the naturall one of the dish it self.

The first tast is that I say *It cannot bee evident those Books were writ by men divinely inspir'd, till all the seeming Contradictions bee solv'd.* Upon this your fluent wit works thus. *How can this bee an Argument against those, who by Scriptures must mean unsenc't characters. I had thought Contradictions had been in the sense of words not in the Letters and Characters; but I perceive bee hath a peculiar Opinion that the four and twenty Letters contradict one another.* Sir. I perceive you have been us'd formerly to bee humin'd at the University for *breaking Jest*s when you should *dispute*, and have taken such a liking to the *Grande copie* of those Applauses, you cannot for your heart yet wean your self of that merry pin of Fancy. But though you bee *pleasant* as you say and follow your sport yet I must bee sober and regard the profit of our Readers. I discourse then thus. Contradictions are formally in mens minds, and *significatively* in words. Since then in the very place you quarrell at I allow your Tenet to bee necessarily this, that those Characters are *Significative* of God's Sense, my discourse runs evidently thus. Since God cannot tell a ly, or, (which is all one, signify a Contradiction) if the Letter of Scripture cannot bee clear'd

clear'd from being *Significative* of Contradictions it cannot bee held of God's enditing. See you any occasion, Sir, in this plain discourse which can deserve such mirth and triumph. You might have pleased then after my words that *the Protestants must mean by Scripture, unsenc't Characters*, have added what imediately follows there p. 13 *with their Aptnes to signify to them assuredly Gods mind*, which I repeat again in the same place, and then where's the difficulty? It being very good reason in my mind to say that Gods Spirit cannot order words to bee written which signify a ly. But this passage, dear Sir, shoves plainly you value honesty and fair dealing much less then your Jest, dismembring a Sentence which ought necessarily go all together, to gain a sorry occasion for your pastime and merriment.

The next *taut* you give of mee is enough to give any Reader who loves sincerity a whole belly full of your manner of confuting. 'Tis found p. 65. where you make mee say that *the Scripture cannot bee the Rule of Faith, because those who are to bee rul'd and guided by the Scriptures Letter to Faith cannot bee Certain of the true Sence of it*. Upon this you descant thus. *Which is to say that unsenc't Letters and Characters cannot bee the Rule of Faith, because the Rule of Faith must have a certain Sence, that is, must not bee unsenc't Letters and Characters; which in plain English amounts*

to thus much, Unsent Letters and Characters cannot be the Rule of Faith, that they cannot. Here is not much *rumbling* of *Rhetorick* (as you call it p. 63.) but here is a strange jumbling of Sence. Let's see if I can set right what you have taken such pains to disorder. I discourse then thus, Points of Faith are determinate Sences, and Faith is Certain; therefore the Way or Means to Faith, that is *the Rule of Faith*, must be a Certain Way of arriving at those determinate Sences: These Sences (say you Protestants) are arriv'd at by the *Scripture's Letter* signifying it to you, therefore you must be Certain by *it* that those Determinate Sences were mean't by God. Not that the Rule of Faith *was* those Sences, but the *Way* to *them*, and They the *End* of *it*, of which that Rule must be significative (as I all over exprest) & so it was properly related to those Sences as the thing Signify'd. Whence in proper Speech they are to be called *its Sence*; in the same manner as 'tis call'd *my Hand-writing* which my Hand writ, though neither my Hand is the writing, nor involves writing in any part of it's Definition, but is distinguish'd from it as *Cause* from *Effect*; nor yet does the Letter taken as the *Way* to Faith, or God's Sence, imply as any part of it self the Sence 'tis to cause in my Knowing Power. If by this time you be awake you will see how you wilfully abuse mee, and how far I am from tautologizing, which for a blind to avoid a more pertinent Answer you pretend. The pith
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of the Cavill lies in those words in your Descant; *The Rule of Faith must have a certain Sence, that is* (as you put it upon mee) *it must not bee unsenc't Letters and Characters*, or it must bee *senc't Letters*, &c. Observe the words *have* and *bee*: the former of which means no more than when wee say a Cause must *have* an Effect; but wee do not therefore infer that the Cause taken as a Cause has *in it self* that very Effect which it produces in another; for Example, the Fire which causes or *beats* is not *heated*, not the *Cold* that *cools* *cooled*; nor for the same reason the Letters which are the *Cause* of Sence in us are not, as such, *senc't*, that is have not that very Effect in themselves which they produce in another, *viz.* in the understanding: For *senc't* means *made to bee understood*, and they cannot bee *made to bee understood*, taken as significative or as the *way to bee understood*. I hope by this you see how the Rule of Faith being the Means, Way or *Cause* of arriving at Faith or Sence may *have* a certain Sence, caus'd by it, as it's Effect, and yet it self not *bee* or include the Effect it causes in another; but for that very reason exclude it, and so bee *unsenc't*; but yet *significative*, or *apt to bee senc't*.

After this follows the Triumph. *And thus I might trace him through all his Properties of the Rule of Faith.* Which I heartily yield too, and I beleeve my Reader that examines these Passages will bee verily perswaded not onely that you may
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do it, but that you *will* do it, 'tis so natural to you, and necessary to boot. Now the greatest Favour you have done mee herein is that by a few unselected Passages you have so acquainted our Readers with your manner of writing and what may bee expected from it, that it will render it needless for mee to spend time in laying you open any farther. Besides I foresee your Reason (such as it is) begins to come into play. Yet some few Favours scatter'd here and there, will, I fear, not cease to sollicit my Gratitude.

You drop some of them upon my Friends. *Capt. Everard* you say (p. 75.) *or his Friend* affirm there are plain contradictions in Scripture, impossible to bee reconcil'd, and therefore Protestants ought to submit to the Infallibility of the Church; instancing in the third Series of Generations, *Mat. 1.* said there to bee *fourteen*; yet, counted, amount but to *thirteen*. And, has hee not good reason? since neither can Scripture alone recommend it self to an Unbeliever to bee of God's enditing if it bee found by him to bee significative of irreconcilable Contradictions, and so needs the Churches Authority to ascertain it to bee such; nor can wee have any security such Contradictions might not bee found in the main points of Faith themselves, did not the Churches Faith writ in her heart keep the Letter of it safe from such enormous Corruptions. Yet you must have your jest, and to bring
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it in you constantly mistake on set purpose ; asking (p. 76.) if the *Infallibility of the Church can make Thirteen Fourteen : notwithstanding* you say p. 75. *this difficulty has been sufficiently satisfy'd by Commentators :* I suppose therefore you judge those Commentators have *sufficiently satisfy'd* you that *Thirteen are Fourteen :* Any body can *sufficiently* satisfy any difficulty with you , provided the Church and her Infallibility have no hand in it. On this occasion I beseech you, Sir, give mee leave to ask you what Commentator has reconcild that most Evident Contradiction in your Translation of the Scripture. Look in your Psalms put in the Book of Common-Prayer, and there Ps. 105, v. 28. wee have these words ; *Hee sent darknes and it was dark ; and they were not obedient unto his word* But in the same Psalm and verse put in the middle of the Bible , these : *Hee sent darknes and made it dark ; and they rebelled not against his word* the former place sayes they were not *obedient* the latter they were *obedient*. I suppose you conceit (mistaking the whole thing) your Church without Infallibility can reconcile those things, which ours even with Infallibility is at a horrible puzzle with.

Mr. Cressy's turn is next ; against whom you have many a fling, but one especially p. 93. because hee sayes *Schism is impossible in our Church*. Which you call *absurd and ludicrous ;* you tell him *hee cannot deny but 'tis possible for*

men

men to break from our Communion: but that the Subtility of it lies here that therefore Schism is impossible in our Church, because so soon as a man is a Schismatick hee is out of it. This done, you ask. And is it not as impossible in the Church of England? Sir, I must tell you your whole Book in a manner is compounded of putting tricks upon your Adversaries; that is putting their sayings upon such accounts they never intended, & then impugning your own fictions. 'Tis not on the impossibility of any going out of us, nor meerly because when any one is out of our Church, hee is not in it, wee ground the Necessity of our Churches Unity; but in this that her nature and Constitution is so fram'd that shee can admit no division in her Bowells, but keeps her self distinguished from Aliens. If any one recede from Faith it must bee by not hearing the present Churches living voice teaching him points which the Knowledge Practice and Expressions of the Teachers determines and make Evident what they are; whence his disbeleef, if exprest, is an Evident matter of Fact which is most apt to make a plain distinction between the disbeleever and the Beleevers, and an Evidence beyond Cavill for the Church Governours to proceed upon. This done (as likewise in the case of high disobedience against Church-Laws, or Governours) shee Excommunicates, that is solemnly separates the Schismaticall Offender from the Obedient Faithfull; Hence those
Faith-

Faithfull look upon him as a Rebell or Outlaw or (as our Saviour expresses) as a *Heathen* or, *Publican* ; no Church-officer admits him to Sacraments but upon his pennance and Satisfaction , nor any Son of the Church will communicate with him in Sacred duties. Pray you, Sir, is this the Temper of your *Church of England*? Your Rule is the Letter of Scripture as conceiv'd significative of Gods word , and this to private understandings. Again you say all necessary points of Faith are plain in it , nay that nothing is fundamentally necessary but what is plain there. Hence all that hold the Letter to bee *plainly Expressive* of Gods Sence and intend to hold to what they conceive *plain* there, whether Socinians , Anabaptists , Independents or whatever other faction, all hold to your Rule of Faith, and so are all Protestants. For, if you would ty any of these to any determinable points, you force them from the Rule of Faith, *Scripture as seeming plain to them*, and would instead thereof bring them to a reliance on your Judgement. And if you would punish them for not doing it, you cannot evidence their Fault by way of *matter of Fact* , that so you may proceed upon it ; for, as long as they profess their intention to hold to what *seems plain* to them in Scripture , and that your Text *seems less plain* to them there than their own, you ought not to proceed against them Ecclesiastically without disannulling your avowed Rule of Faith. And your carriage

executes accordingly neither using Church-discipline against them for Tenets; nor yet for denying or disobeying your Government, Episcopacy, though held by you divinely instituted: When did you put any distinction by any solemn Ecclesiastical declaration between an Anabaptist, Presbyterian, Socinian &c. and your selves? When did you excommunicate them & warn the purer Protestants by any Publick Ecclesiasticall Act not to joyn with them in Sacred Offices, but to look upon them as Aliens? Might not any of them come to receive the Communion, if hee would? or has any discipline past upon him to debar him from being admitted? None that wee see. Your Party then is indeed no Ecclesiasticall body, cohering by Unity of Tenets or Government, but a Medley rather consisting of men of any tenet almost, and so bears division, disunion and Schism, that is, the Formal cause of *non-Entity of a Church*, in it's very Bowells.

These two flames of yours, are, Sir, the *Favours* you have done my Friends; and I can onely tell you in a country complement, I *thank* you as much for them, as if you had done them to my self.

Seeing your Reason begin to play it's part bravely in the following part of your Book, I thought I had done my duty of *Thanking*: but I percieve one main Engin your Reason made use of was to make mee perpetually contradict my self. And this you perform'd by singling a
few

few words out of my Book from their fellows, introducing them in other circumstances, and so almost in every Citation falsifying my Intentions; and this purposely, as will bee seen by this that you practis'd designe and Artifice in bringing it about. This obliges mee, in stead of making an End, to return back; and to show how sincerely you have us'd mee in almost all your Citations.

I omit your false pretence that I mean't to define, contrary to my expresse words.

You tell your Reader p. 11. That if *any presume to say this Book, (Scripture) depends not on Tradition for it's Sence, then the most scurrilous language is not bad enough; then are those Sacred writings but Ink variously figur'd in a Book,* quoting for those words App. 4th. p. 319. But if wee look there, not a word is there found of it's depending or not depending on *Tradition* for it's Sence nor of making that the *Cause* why I us'd those words you object, & cite for it; but onely that whereas my Lord of *Downs* sayes his Faith has for its object the Scriptures, I tell him that since he means not by the word *Scripture* any determinate Sence (which is the formall parts of words) hee must mean the *Characters* or *Ink thus figur'd in a Book,* as is evident; there being nothing imaginable in them besides the *matter* and the *form* which, every Schollar knows, compound the thing. This being then the plain tenour of my discourse

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there;

there, and not the least word of *Tradition* *sen-*
cencing Scripture. Whatever the Truth of the Thing
is, 'tis evident you have abus'd my words as
found in the place you cite.

My Citation p. 12. which abstracts from what
security wee can have of those parts of Scripture
which concern not Faith, you will needs re-
strain to signifie *no security at all either of Letter*
or Sence: which is neither found in my words
nor meaning.

How you have abus'd my words [*to avoid*
Calumny with the Vulgar] cited by you p. 13.
as also the former of those cited p. 14. I have al-
ready shown §. 9, and 10.

P. 17. You quote my words, *'Tis certain the*
Apostles taught the same Doctrine they writ,
whence you infer they writ the same Doctrine
they taught. Which your introducing Discourse
would make to signifie an Equality of Extent in
Writing and Tradition, by saying I grant *this*
Doctrine (which signifies there the First deliver'd
Doctrine) *was afterwards by the Apostles com-*
mitted to writing. Whereas, whoever reads
my 29th. Cor. will see I can onely mean by the
word *same Doctrine*, a *not-different* Doctrine.
Whatever the truth of the point is, this shows
you have an habituall imperfection not to let the
words you cite signifie as the Authour evidently
meant them, but you must bee scrving them to
servè your own turn.

You quote mee p. 36. to say, that *Primitive*

Antiquity learn'd their Faith by another method a long time before many of those Books were universally spread amongst the Vulgar. The summe of your Answer is, that when the Apostles *who did miracles* were dead, Writing then became needfull: But that in *those Circumstances Orall Tradition was a sufficient way of conveying a Doctrine.* What I note is that you ended your citation at the words [*before those Books were universally spread amongst the Vulgar*] but had you added what follow'd immediately to compleat that period, [*much less the Catalogue collected and acknowledged*] you had been put to confess too that Tradition was a *sufficient way* for diverse Ages after the Apostles were dead, which had been little favourable to your Tenet. I complain then that by citing mee by halves, as you do frequently, you slip the answering better half of my Arguments; and, here particularly, as appears by the words [*much less*] that part in which I put the *most force*.

P. 41. You put mee to *say expressly* that *Tradition is the best way imaginable to convey down such Laws to us.* Now if by the word *such*, you onely meant *such as it concerns every man to bee skilfull in*, and had so exprest it, you had done well, for 'tis my position; but you had brought an ill-resembling Instance of *Magna Charta*, and make mee seem to allow your Instance, and to affirm Tradition is the best way to bring down *Magna Charta*, as appears by your words. Mr. S.

*Saith expressly it is ; but how truly I appeal to the Experience , and the wisdom of our Law-givers who seem to think otherwise ; making my word such, mean such as Magna Charta , which is far from my meaning : in regard I judge not Magna Charta a thing in which 'tis every man's particular concern to be skilfull in, but Lawyers onely whom others trust ; few in England , but they being thoroughly acquainted with the Laws found there. Take your own Liberty, Sir, in making Parallels ('tis my Advantage you should, you pick out such awkward ones) but when you have made them, do not disingenuously put them upon mee , and quote mee to say them expressly. Thus you use my words, *Why may not hee mistrust his own Eyes*, which (p. 16, and 17.) were apply'd by mee to the business of mistaking or not mistaking in transcribing perfectly a whole Book or correcting the Press, in which we daily experience miscarriage ; but you apply these words to your own senseless Parallell of seeing the City of *Rome* p. 83, and then by such an application endeavour to make them seem ridiculous, as they must needs for you had discours'd ridiculously, and by making them part of your Discourse, and not taking them as any part of mine, had made them so too. I could instance in many others of this nature , but I am too long already.*

P. 61. being to state the point, you alledge my words *Sure-footing* p. 13. That the Protestants

stants cannot by [*Scriptures*] mean the Sence of them, but the Book, that is, such or such Characters not yet sent or interpreted. And there you stop; my immediately following words explaining my meaning are these: *that is, such and such Characters in a Book with their Aptness to signifie to them assuredly God's mind, or ascertain them of their Faith.* And this Explication you omit; which had been nothing had you not made an ill use of that omission; but your Cavills afterwards, and the loud out-cries in your Book in many places, of a *senceless Book*, my Ignorance of your Tenet, & what not, are all grounded upon your own fly omitting those words in which I exprest your Tenet to bee, that those Characters were significative of your Faith; & I wonder what else you would have a Rule of Faith to bee but a *Mean's to signifie to you God's Sence*, or the Faith Christ taught those inspir'd Writers. It was one of my requests in my Letter that wee might agree to acknowledge what was Truth in one another's Books; but you use all the Arts Insincerity can suggest to deprave, wrest or diminish my words, rather than I should appear to speak reason in any thing. All must bee monstrous in your Adversary when your pregnant Fancy and dextrous pencil come to delineate it; which shews indeed much crafty wit, but I doubt the Reader will think it argues not too much Honesty.

I affirm'd Sure-footing p. 17. that the numerous

Comments writ upon the Scripture and the infinite Disputes about the Sence of it even in most concerning points, as in that of Christ's Divinity beat it out so plain to us that this (to wit to find out a Certain Sence of Scripture by their Interpretation) is not the task of the Vulgar, that 'tis perfect phrenzy to deny it, which you quote p.85. and diverse other places, leaving out still my words and sence that [*this is not the task of the Vulgar ;*] (upon which that whole δ proceeds) and impugning it accordingly : See your own words p.86. making mee say *The Protestants cannot bee certain of the true Sence of it*, as if Protestants and Vulgar were the same notion : Also p. 86. *Hee tells us* (say you) *the numerous Comments upon Scripture are an Evidence that no man can bee Certain of the true Sence of it.* This improves it into a very ample Falsification, for the word [*no man*] excludes all Catholikes too, and indeed all the world, however proceeding to interpret it ; whereas I onely engage in the place cited against *the Vulgar*. And, after you have ended you Confute all built on your own omission of those important words ; you single out (after your old fashion) two or three of my words [*'tis perfect phrenzy to deny it*] and call it, a *hot phrase* ; whereas 'tis very luke-warm taken in the occasion I spoke it ; namely that the *Vulgar* could not bee certain of the *right Interpretation of Scripture*, since even Learned Commentators so strangely differ'd about it. How you will

will clear your self of this *kind* Infincerity without casting a mist before men's eyes, that they cannot read right, I cannot in your behalf imagine.

P. 104, You quote mee twice as endeavouring to prove that men may safely rely on a *generall and uncontroll'd Tradition*. Which, though you pretend not my words, yet I count it an injury to impose upon mee such a Sence. *Uncontroll'd* joyn'd to Tradition is such another Epithet as *Sufficient* joyn'd by you to *Certainty*. I, who contend for the *absolute Certainty* of Faith, would say *Uncontrollable*, not *Uncontroll'd*; for a thing may be *Uncontroll'd* meerly because it had the good Fortune that none had occasion to look into it, and so controll it: whereas nothing can bee Uncontrollable but by virtue of it's Grounds 'tis built on, preserving it from a Possibility of *ever* being controll'd. Your intent in producing those two Citations from mee is as you declare it p. 105. is to show the *Unhappiness* of my *Demonstrations*, that *in order to demonstrate the uncertainty of Books and Writings must suppose all those Principles to bee uncertain which (I) take to bee self-evident and unquestionable when I am to demonstrate the Infallibility of Orall Tradition*. A hard case! yet it will bee harder to come of, for you never are more powerfull than when you use your wit to make Authours fall out with one another, and unnaturall mee with my self. But to the point:

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In the first Citation I say, *That the common course of humane Conversation* makes it a madness not to beleieve great multitudes of *Knowers*, ---&c. But I add *Sure-footing* p. 49. what you omit, that *in the way of Tradition all Deliverers or immediate Forefathers are Knowers*, -----all the *Knowledge* requisit being of what they were taught and practis'd accordingly all their lives. I beseech you, Sir, are those great multitudes of immediate *Forefathers Knowers* when they deliver down a Book for a right one; that is, do they all *know* the Translation is right made, the Copy right printed or written, and all the Perquisites which are needfull that they may bee truly said to *know* this Book is rightly qualify'd. You see then how far I am from contradicting my self, unless you show that I hold all Recommenders or Accepters of a Book to bee *Knowers*, as they are of the practicall Doctrine they were bred and brought up to, which I neither do, nor can with any Sence profess. The Reader also will see that the stratagem by virtue of which you made mee contradict my self, was your omitting those words of mine which made the contrary clear.

The next place you cite p. 104. from mee to the same purpose, is this, that *none but madmen can suspect deceit where such multitudes agree unanimously in a matter of Fact*. Now the words *such multitudes*, mean all their immediate *Forefathers* qualify'd as *Knowers*, as I exprest
my

myself a little before, which will very ill suite your purpose, in regard the matters of Fact employ'd about the *delivering a right Book*, as in translating, transcribing, pointing right &c. of which their Sences onely can make them *Knowers*, are so innumerable, and minute, & yet such that very great miscarriages may ensue upon a very little over-sight, that to think all Forefathers, can *know* no Fault in any of these interven'd, is such an extravagant conceit, that onely a most obstinate passion could make a rationall soul entertain it. The point is at present that you affect to represent mee to the half part, and by that art you take mee up perpetually before I bee down; For it is not an agreement in *any* matter of Fact, but in such a one as may bee known by all, in which I place the force of being able to oblige others to assent to their proposalls.

You treat mee far worse p. 105. making mee say that the *Providence of God is no security against those Contingencies the Scripture is liable to*; because wee cannot bee certain of the divine Providence or Assistance to his Church but by the Letter of Scripture; which is to put upon mee a ridiculous Argument, making mee infer there is no such Assistance, from this, that wee cannot bee Certain of it but *such a way*. Whereas Common sense tells every one that our *Certainty* being an Effect of the Thing's Existence, must depend indeed on their Existence, in regard we cannot bee *Certain* of what is not; But the things

things can *exist* whether wee bee *Certain* of them or no ; I affirm then and charge upon you that I have no where either such words or sence in my whole book as you with a strange precipitancy (to say no worse) affirm p. 104. that I *tell you Sure-footing* p. 18. where my discourse onely pretends to shew that, who will argue orderly must first bee *Certain* of that on which hee builds his Conclusion ere hee asserts the Conclusion it self ; This was the tenour of my discourse there which I conceive to bee evident beyond Cavill. If I err'd any where 'twas in supposing you onely took from Scripture that *God assisted his Church in preserving a right Copy of Scripture* and therefore argu'd preposterously if you inferr'd, God has a Providence over his Church in preserving right Scripture, therefore 'tis preserv'd right. But this I spoke onely with an If, and besides had good grounds for it : For I conceiv'd there being but two wayes to know this, by *Revelation* which you profess to have onely by way of Scripture; and by naturall Reason, whence you could not have it : For however meer nature might teach it's exact Followers there was a God, and that hee had Providence over his Creatures, (as it taught *Socrates, Seneca* and such like) yet I remember not that wee have any Ground to say meer nature inform'd any, God had a *Church*, much less that there was no way to *Provide* for her continuance in Faith, or deriving his Doctrine down

in her , but by way of Books. Hence I concluded and conclude still it must bee either by *Scripture* or no way you can know God has such a kind of Providence over his Church.

You are pleased to tell your Reader p. 119. that *this Principle [That in matters of Religion a man cannot bee reasonably satisfy'd with any thing less than that Infallible Assurance which is wrought by Demonstration]*, is the main Pillar of Mr. S's. Book; whereas I assure you, Sir, the last part of the kind slur you put upon mee, [*which is wrought by Demonstration*] was never either my words nor sence; neither Pillar nor the least part of *Sure-footing*: wherefore, as you put those words in a different Letter for mine, so you had done well to have put down the place too where those words were found; which you wisely omitted. If I had affirm'd that *that Assurance which grounds Faith must bee wrought by Demonstration*, how should I pretend the *Vulgar* can bee sav'd who are manifestly incapable of Demonstration, as I also frequently acknowledge. Understand then my Tenet at length, which you ought to have done e're you begun to write against it; but that to use your own words you thought it an *absurd and ridiculous study to bend your brains to read my Book as you would do Euclid* p. 292. which yet is no more but to consider attentively my Principles and my Consequences. My Tenet is that all the Faithfull have, and those who seek after Faith may have

things can *exist* whether wee bee *Certain* of them or no ; I affirm then and charge upon you that I have no where either such words or sence in my whole book as you with a strange precipitancy (to say no worse) affirm p. 104. that I *tell you Sure-footing* p. 18. where my discourse onely pretends to shew that, who will argue orderly must first bee *Certain* of that on which hee builds his Conclusion ere hee asserts the Conclusion it self ; This was the tenour of my discourse there which I conceive to bee evident beyond Cavill. If I err'd any where 'twas in supposing you onely took from Scripture that *God assisted his Church in preserving a right Copy of Scripture* and therefore argu'd preposterously if you inferr'd, God has a Providence over his Church in preserving right Scripture, therefore 'tis preserv'd right. But this I spoke onely with an If, and besides had good grounds for it : For I conceiv'd there being but two wayes to know this, by *Revelation* which you profess to have onely by way of Scripture; and by naturall Reason, whence you could not have it : For however meer nature might teach it's exact Followers there was a God, and that hee had Providence over his Creatures, (as it taught *Socrates*, *Seneca* and such like) yet I remember not that wee have any Ground to say meer nature inform'd any, God had a *Church*, much less that there was no way to *Provide* for her continuance in Faith, or deriving his Doctrine down
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You are pleased to tell your Reader p. 119. that *this Principle* [*That in matters of Religion a man cannot bee reasonably satisfy'd with any thing less than that Infallible Assurance which is wrought by Demonstration*], is the main Pillar of Mr. S's. Book; whereas I assure you, Sir, the last part of the kind slur you put upon mee, [*which is wrought by Demonstration*] was never either my words nor sence; neither Pillar nor the least part of *Sure-footing*: wherefore, as you put those words in a different Letter for mine, so you had done well to have put down the place too where those words were found; which you wisely omitted. If I had affirm'd that *that Assurance which grounds Faith must bee wrought by Demonstration*, how should I pretend the *Vulgar* can bee sav'd who are manifestly incapable of Demonstration, as I also frequently acknowledge. Understand then my Tenet at length, which you ought to have done e're you begun to write against it; but that to use your own words you thought it an *absurd and ridiculous study to bend your brains* to read my Book as you would do *Euclid* p. 292. which yet is no more but to consider attentively my Principles and my Consequences. My Tenet is that all the Faithfull have, and those who seek after Faith may have

have, and those who seek after Faith *may have* Assurance of their Faith wrought in them by *Practicall Self-evidence*, in the same naturall manner, but with far better Reason, than they beleeve there was a Henry the 8th. and, that 'tis onely Schollars that go about to *Demonstrate* what the Faithfull *know*, but, for want of Study or Reflexion on their own thoughts and on the Causes and Manners with which they were so assur'd, are ignorant how to make it out. I beseech you, Sir, repress this overflowing of Kindness in giving mee so many Advantages against you, and take a little pains to understand what I say, nor (to borrow your elegant expression p. 292.) suffer your self to bee so *demurely discharged of a Study* so necessary and so honorable.

I had affirm'd in my Letter to my Answerer p. 5th. that it was a *civill piece of Atheistry* to say *Faith is possible to bee false for any thing wee know*, or that wee have onely Probability for our Faith; And you kindly tell us p. 135. that *what M.S. calls a civill piece of Atheistry is advanc't in most express terms by his best Friends*. Sir, I account *Rushworths Dialogues* my best Friend, and I perceive you abuse the *Preface* of it notoriously, which was wholly design'd to evince the contrary positions; citing the Author of it p. 132. to say that *such a Certainty as makes the cause alwayes work the same Effect though it take not away the absolute possibility of working otherwise, ought absolutely to bee reckon'd in the degree of true*

Certainty, whereas hee only tells us there p. 7. that by *Morall Certainty* [*some understood*] *such a Certainty as made your cause alwayes work the same Effect*; whom a little after hee reprehends for undervaluing this for *morall Certainty*, which is *true* (or *Physicall*) *Certainty*; putting an Instance of the *Certainty* hee has that hee shall not repeat in order the same words hee spoke this last year; and yet (sayes hee) *these men* will say, I am *onely morally Certain* of it. Your injury then lyes here, that by leaving out the words at the beginning of the Citation by *morall Certainty* [*some understood*] *such a Certainty* &c. you make him say what hee evidently makes *others* say, and condemns them for so saying; for hee is far from abetting their tenet tha a reall *possibility to bee otherwise* makes a true *Certainty*; but asserts that to bee *truly Certain* which they mistook for possible to bee otherwise or *morally Certain*; which is the plain tenour of his discourse, as it is the whole scope of that Preface to force the direct contrary Position to what you would so disingenuously impose upon him. The two next Citations are onely mistaken; for, 'tis one thing to say what men would doe, did they love Heaven as they ought, or had they no Interest in their Souls, another to ask what means is most efficacious to beget a hearty love of Heaven in their Souls; the prudentialness of their obligation, in case of a higher probability onely, joyn'd with their undervalue of Heaven was enough.

enough to make them miscarry ; but 'tis a question whether 'twas enough to elevate them sufficiently amidst the Temptations of our three Spirituall Enemies ; to heavenly love so as to save them ; or if they bee very speculative, against the Temptations of Fancy and the seeming Impossibility of the mysteries. Also 'tis another thing to ask what men should do if there were no Infallibility ; or (which is all one to them) if they *hold* none ; and, whether Infallibility or an absolute Impossibility Faith should bee otherwise , bee not incomparably the best for mankind , and so , laid by God who ever does the best for his Creatures. As I would not therefore have the Protestants renounce all practice of Religion because they have not an Infalible means of knowing their Faith to bee true ; so neither do I doubt , but had they such Assurance, their *Faith* would work through Charity with far more liveness and steadiness than either it now does or can do.

You abuse what you cite from mee p. 140. by impugning half the Sentence onely ; the other half would have discoverd I spoke not of mans nature according to his morall part , but according as 'tis *cognoscitive* and this chiefly in naturall Knowledges imprinted directly by his Senses on his Soul. Represent things truely, and then dispute as much as you will, otherwise you but injure your self and abuse your Reader, while you go about with a preposterus Courtesy to oblige mee.

P. 145. According to your usuall sincerity you quote *Rulhworth's* Nephew to say that a few good words are to bee cast in concerning Scripture for the satisfaction of indifferent men who have been brought up in this verball and apparent respect of the Scripture; to which you add, who it seems are not yet arriv'd to that degree of Catholick Piety and Fortitude as to endeavour patiently the word of God should bee reviled and slighted. Whereas in the place you cite hee onely expressees it would bee a *Satisfaction* to indifferent men, to see the positions one would induce them to embrace, maintainable by Scripture. Which is so different from the invidious meaning your malice puts upon it, and so innocent and unoffensive in it self, that one who were not well acquainted with you and knew not your temper and over good nature to bee such that you car'd not to undo your self to do your Friend a *Kindnes*, would wonder with what Conscience you could so wrest and pervert it.

P. 146. You mention my explaining the notion of *Tradition*, which you carp at as *tedious*; and yet (as wee have seen by frequent experience) all was too little to make you understand it, though I endeavourd there according to my utmost to render it unmistakable. But you mistake it here again, objecting that I *instance in set-forms, the Creed and ten Commandments, whereas the Apol. for Tradition says That cannot bee a Tradition which is deliver'd in set words.*

It had been better you had put down that Authors own words Apol. p. 81. which are, *A Tradition (as mee have explicated it) being a Sence deliver'd &c.* for why was it not possible hee and I should explicate it diversly? But to the point. I speak of *Tradition or delivery*, you and the *Apology of a Tradition* or the *thing deliver'd*, which you confound. Now a *Tradition* or *point deliver'd* being *Sence*, and *Sence* abstracting from my particular manner of expressing it, hee had good reason to say there, that *a Tradition* is a *Sence settled in the Auditor's hearts by hundreds of different Expressions explicating the same meaning*; nor do you any where find mee say but that, though the Creed and Ten Commandments bee the shortest expressions of the main points of Speculative and Practicall Christianity, and so most sutable to the young memories I speak of, yet I no where say that Forefathers exprest the Sences contain'd in them *no other way*; or, that they did not deliver them *in hundreds of different Expressions*, according as the manifold variety of occasions and circumstances, accidentally lighting, prompted the Fancies of the Teachers after a naturall kind of manner to declare themselves. You see, Sir, how unfortunate you are still when you would make us contradict ourselves or one another; And the civilest Excuse for your perpetuall failings herein is to alledge that you are utterly ignorant of what you would impugn; and I wish that were the worst.

You

You put upon mee p. 152. that unless a person to bee converted *can demonstrate one pretended Rule certain and Infallible, the other not; hee hath not found out the Rule of Faith.* I wish you had told us where I say this, for I must disavow it as directly opposit to my Doctrine which is that our Rule of Faith's Certainty is Practically-self-evident; and known by virtue of an obvious familiar conversation with the nature of things, and, therefore, that persons to bee converted may come to Faith without demonstration at all. I may perhaps say that in an Assent thus grounded there is found at the bottom what is *demonstrable* by a *learned man*, or apt to yeeld *matter for a demonstration*; but that those who come to Faith must *demonstrate* or *frame demonstrations* (which 'tis manifest onely Schollers, and good ones too, can do) is far from my Tenet, however 'tis your *Kindness* to put it upon mee, right or wrong. You shall take your choice whether the Reader shall think you *understand not* the Tenet you are confuting, or that understanding it you wilfully injure it.

You proceed p. 153. that *according to Mr. S. Reason can never demonstrate that the one is a Certain and Infallible Rule, the other not.* That *never* is a hard word; and it will seem wonderfull to some Readers I should say Reason can *never demonstrate* this, and yet in that very Book contend to demonstrate it by Reason my self; nay make that the main scope of my Book. But, Sir,

those Readers, know not yet the power of your wit and sincerity, which can make mee say any thing, nay *say* and *unsay* as it pleases. Yet you quote my expresse words for it, *Sure-footing* p. 53. where you say I [*tell* you, *Tradition hath for it's basis Man's Nature, not according to his Intellectualls, because they do but darkly grope in the pursuit of Science, &c.*] I deny them, Sir, to bee my words or sence; you have alter'd the whole face and frame of them by putting in the word *Because*, which makes mee discourse as if man's Intellectualls could *never* arrive at *Evidence* nor consequently *Certainty*; and you keep the Reader from knowing the true sence of my words, by curtailing the sentence with an [*&c.*]

• my words are, *not according to his Intellectualls, darkly groping in the pursuit of Science, by reflected thoughts or Speculations, amidst the misty vapours exhal'd by his Passion predominant over his rationall will*] which discovers I speak of our Intellectualls plac't in such circumstances, or employ'd about such a matter, as our Passion or Affection is apt to blind and mislead us in it, which wee experience too too often. But do I therefore affirm our understanding can *never* arrive at Science at all, - or that our Passion exhales vapours to hinder us from seeing the Truth of the first Proposition in *Euclid*; or was it ever heard that any man was transported so by his Passion as to deny there was a *Henry* the 8th? Or can any one out of Passion bee ignorant

rant of or forget what is inculcated into his Sences almost every day, which naturall Knowledge, I there make the Basis of Tradition? Pray, Sir, reflect on my words once more and on the Tenour of my Discourse, and you shall see it onely says, that Tradition has for it's Basis man's Nature, not according to his *morall part*, which is of it self pervertible, nor yet his Intellectuals as subject to his Moralls, but on *naturall Knowledges imprinted by direct Sensations*, not subject at all to his Will, but necessary and inevitable: and when you have done this, you will easily see how you injure mee, though I expect not from you any Acknowledgment of it. You commit those Faults too often to concern your self in such a trifle as any handsome Satisfaction.

Your next Citation p. 153. layes on load. 'Tis taken out of my 2d. Appendix p. 183. My whole Discourse there is to show how Reason behaves her self *in finding out the Authority shee is to rely on* that this is God's Sence or Faith, and how *in the points of Faith* themselves. Concerning the former I discourse there §. 3. and have these Expressions, that *No Authority deserves assent farther than true Reason gives it to deserve; that the Church's Authority is found by my Reason to bee Certain; that 'tis perfectly rationall to beleve the Church assuring mee the Divine Authority is engag'd for such and such points; that Gods and the Church's Authority as Objects im-*

printing a conceit of themselves in my mind as they are in themselves, *oblig'd my Reason to conclude and my Judgment to hold them such as they were*; nor have I the least expression of diffidence of naturall Reason's certifying mee perfectly of the Ground of my Faith, which can no wayes bee done by *Acts of reflected Reason*, (which I there speak of) but by *demonstrating* it. After this §. 4. I come to discourse how differently Reason bears her self in order to the *points of Faith* or the *mysteries themselves*. Hereupon I have these words. p. 183. *Reason acts now much differently than formerly. Before I came at Faith shee acted about her own Objects, Motives or Maxims by which shee scan'd the Authorities wee spoke of; but in Acts of Faith shee hath nothing to do with the Objects of those Acts, or Points of Faith.* Then follow immediately the words you cite, *Shee is like a dim-sighted man; who us'd his Reason to find a trusty Friend to lead him in the twy-light, and then rely'd on his guidance rationally without using his own Reason at all about the Way it self.* Which most plainly signifies, that, as a dim-sighted man cannot use his Reason about the Way, for that requir'd, it should well affect his Senses, and imprint it's right notion there, (which it did not,) but yet could use his Reason about chusing a trusty Friend to guide him, for this depended not on his dim-sight, but the converse and negotiation with his neighbours and relations which hee had been

been inur'd to, and so was capable to wield and manage Yuch a Discourse : So, our Reason, *dim-sighted in the Mysteries of Faith*, in which neither Senses nor Maxims of Human Science had given her light enough, could not employ her talent of discoursing evidently and scientifically to conclude the *Points of Faith* themselves; but yet was by Motives and Maxims within her own Sphere, enabled to scan the nature of *Authorities*, and find out on which as on a trusty Friend shee might safely rely. This, Sir, is evidently my Discourse, from whence you will needs force mee to say Reason is dim-sighted about the Authority wee come to Faith by or *the Rule of Faith*. Now my whole Discourse in that very place aiming at the direct contrary, and you leaving out the immediately foregoing words which clearly discover'd it, I hope you will not take it ill, Sir, if I tell you I fear any sincere Examiner of it will judge, that though you hold Plain-dealing a Jewell, yet you would not bee willing to go to too much cost for it. Especially when he reflects that you build better half your Confutation in your Book on such kind of willing mistakes, and hope to blind it and make it take by Sophister-like quibbles, flouts and jeers with which you use to sound your own triumph. I expected, sweet Sir, some First Principles of your Discourse, and I see now you intend those Artifices for such; none else have I met with, nor do you build on any thing so

much as these; but, one of these laid for a Ground, you run on with such a Carreer as if you would overthrow all the Sence and Reason that ever comes in your way.

You tell mee p. 158. by a parallell Discourse to mine against my Lord of *Downs* that my demonstrations are *none unless I vouch some particularity in my Method above what's in others*, which p. 160. you say you remember not I have done any where. It seems you read my *Transition* not with any sober intent to understand it and speak solidly to it, but onely to carp at it, and break jests upon it. Have you so soon forgot the pleasant mood it put you into p. 3, and 4. I contest then that the Method I there declare my self to pursue is *particular* above what I ever observ'd in any of your Controvertists; not that they want better Parts to lay it, but because they want a good Cause to bear it, and give them leave to follow it. I declare also that I hold that Method sufficient to demonstrate by, though I pretend it not the exactest than can bee made. As for those great men whom you alledge to differ in demonstrations, (*Charles Thynn* I leave to bear you company, you are both such merry Blades) I doubt not but, were the business well examin'd, their differences spring from not attending heedfully to the *Method of concluding*; and that no miscarriage could ensue in any Discourse, were the way of Discoursing perfectly laid, agreed to, and exactly follow'd; nay that

that those few Differences amongst Geometricians arise from the same defect; as, were it reasonable, I could show particularly (with the help of a Friend, you must think) in that famous one about *angulus contingentiae*. But to our present purpose; meethinks, Sir, you may remember, a thing call'd a Letter to my Answerer, where I endeavour'd at least at some means to settle some *particularity* in our Method above what has been practic't in other Controversies formerly, begging you would agree to it that so wee might both follow it; but you would have none you thank't mee: Since then you would not accept it when offer'd, you should not ask for it again when your Book is writ and the Circumstances of using it past. But perhaps there lies the policy of it! You end with a Glance or two at my *Self-confidence*? But are you Propheticall in this too, Sir, that 'tis some proud and vain humour in mee, and not rather my Assuredness of the Truth of my Cause, and of the Conclusiveness of my Method, which makes mee deliver my self undauntedly? See my Letter to my Answerer where I have these words p. 18. *By this means it will bee quickly discover'd whether or no you have overthrown my Discourse by showing it ill-coherent, and how far 'tis faulty: that, if I cannot clear it to bee connected, I may confess my fault and endeavour to amend it. For, however I see my Grounds evident, yet I am far from judging my self Infal-*
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ble in drawing my Consequences : though I see withall the Method I take , will not let me err much ; or, if I do , my Errour will bee easily discoverable ; because I go not about to cloud my self in Words , but to speak out , as plain as I can, from the nature of the Thing. Had you a desire to practice the due candour towards mee I should have done to you , you would not have sought occasions to put in upon a personall priding my self in my performances , which I so frequently disown and place all my advantage in my Cause and my Method. But you are angry I deliver my self so boldly in what I take to bee Truth ; I beseech you , Sir , is it not naturall for any one who judges hee speaks what's Evident , to expresse himself fearlessly when hee disputes against an Adversary of the Truth whose Cause hee has espoused ; as , 'tis on the contrary for one who judges hee has onely Probability for what hee sayes , to speak dis-confidently , and condescendingly , and when hee indeed sneaks not daring to speak out , then to praise himself and his party for *modest* and *moderate* men ? You know by experience , Sir , 'tis. Has there in our late age come out a Book more brisk than this of yours , not in *asserting* , but in scorn , and proud petulancy , and (which is to bee pittied) proud of an aiery jest or some gay conceit ? Shall I bee bold to tell you , Sir , what is *Self confidence* ? To undertake to write a Discourse about the Ground of Faith , without so
much

inuch as one Principle that deserves to bee call'd such to bless himself with; to lay for Grounds all along Falsifications of his Adversaries meaning and words, and then quibbling, taunting and vapouring as if all the world were his own. Lastly, to tell his Auditours soberly and sadly out the Pulpit all is *God's Word* hee preaches, and press they should beleeve him; and yet when hee writes against us, confess all hee preaches concerning *Salvation* and the *Way* to it, *may possibly bee false*; that is, for any thing hee absolutely *knows*, hee has not told them one true word all the while. This, Sir, I must needs confess, is such a Heroick strain of self-confidence that, however it bee familiar and naturall to others, yet I dispair for my part ever to attain it. To bear ones self as holding a thing a demonstration which he judges hee has Evidence that 'tis such, is a puling and trifling kind of *self-conceit*; but to carry it out with the greatest Formality in the world as if it were most Certain, and yet hold at the same time and profess 'tis *possible to bee false*, that is, may for any thing any man *knows*, *bee shown false to morrow*, is a noble and gallant *Self confidence*. and such a one as fears not the face of any man living.

P. 161. You come to examin my demonstrations *à priori*, and in order to it, my four Grounds, which you affirm you *will set down in my own words*. Which intimates you *did not* do so *formerly*, though it bee your duty

to do it *alwayes*; However 'tis a Kindness which I am bound to thank you for, and as far as I discern you have not faltred in it, of which I here make my hearty Acknowledgment. But, Sir, may I not fear this particular *Resolution* of yours here to bee *Sincere* springs hence, because in this Sect. 2. where you put down my words, you do not yet go about to apply them to your Discourse, and attempt to confute; which in your next Section p. 163. you endeavour? I foresee you will bee shrew'dly tempted there, for want of other Answer, to break your *resolution*; till wee come there then I leave you with my hearty wishes of strength & constancy against that habituall Infirmary which so often overcomes all your *resolutions* of that nature.

And wee are now come to your third Sect p. 163. (the place of the triall of your perseverance) where you begin your confute; and contend first that my Demonstration *would conclude too much* viz. as you tell us p. 164. that if it were true, *it would bee impossible any Christian should turne Apostate or Heretick, or that any Christian should live wickedly.* I marry, this were a rare Demonstration indeed! But, how comes my demonstration to bee thus guilty of a plot to make all the world Saints, or rather of drawing after it a Conclusion so extravagant. By virtue of a direct Falsification both of my words and Sence, by cogging in a word lit le in show but very large in Sence, namely the monosyllable

[All]

[*All*] making my Principle run thus that the greatest hopes and fear are apply'd to the minds of all Christians; which you put down here in the Italick letter, the same you quoted my words in. I beseech you, Sir, review my own words put down lately by your self p. 161. 162. at what time you made that good resolution, and see if any such word bee there; But, what's most materiall is this; Let the Reader survey your following discourse which aims to confute mee, and hee will see 'tis wholly and solely built on this word *All*, so that your own Falsification is still the First Principle, which gives the Strength and Life to your Confutation. What use you make of it may bee seen p. 164 l. 8. *That any Christian &c. Ib. l. 12. That any Christian should live wickedly l. 18. That any Christian should turn Apostate l. 26. But all Christians have those Arguments of Hopes and Fears strongly apply'd. l. ult. 'Tis necessary all Christians.* Again p. 165. l. 3. (which I desire the Reader to note that hee may see how bold you are in your imposing things upon mee) *If these causes bee put in all the Faithfull actually causing as (say you) Mr. S. saith expressly in his Grounds, Whereas I assure the Reader Mr. S. sayes expressly no such thing. But to proceed p. 165. l. 8. & 9. 'Tis impossible there should bee any defection, &c. l. 14. 'Tis impossible any single Christian. P. 167- It concludes there can bee no Hereticks or Apostates &c.* This, dear Sir, you use mee: First you put

put upon mee other words and meaning, and then overthrow most powerfully not what I said or meant, but what you had counterfeited mee to do; which victorious way of confuting runs thorough the better half your Book.

You affirm p. 165. that I *liberally acknowledge in other places* this (to wit, that 'tis impossible any single Christian should either totally Apostatize or fall into Heresie) is a genuine Consequence from my Principles. Surely, Sir, your great plot is to have mee thought a direct mad man or Frantick; For never did any man moderately in his wits advance a Position and pretend to *demonstrate* it, which is contrary to the Eye-sight and frequent Experience of the whole world; nay write a whole Chapter as I did *Sure-footing* p. 65. how *Heresies come in*, and yet maintain in the same Book no man can turn Heretick that is that *no Heresy could ever come in*. Well, but what are those *other places* which must prove mee a *liberal Acknowledger* of such an unheard of Paradox? You assign four places p. 165, & 166. The first you introduce mee thus. *Hee tells us* (and then you quote my words from *Sure-footing* p. 54.) *That it exceeds all the power of Nature (abstracting from the Cases of madness and violent disease) to blot the Knowledges of this Doctrine out of the Soul of one single Beleever*. I assure you, Sir, I tell you no such thing, and that I have neither those words nor sense in my whole Book, which makes mee doubt you
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did not so much as *make a resolution* here to *set down my own words*, as you did formerly; and I wish for your own sake, you did not resolve the *contrary*. My Doctrine is that *the Knowledges of this (or Christ's) Doctrin*, may be blotted, not onely out of the Soul of *one single Beleever*, but *all Beleevers*, in case it bee laid there onely opinionatively, or imprinted slightly by a fleeting Sermon or wordish discourse, apt to go in at the one ear and out at the other. My words in that place cited are these? *It exceeds all the power of nature (abstracting from madness and violent disease) to blot knowledges* THUS FIXT *out of the Soul of one single believer*. And, what mean the words [*thus fixt*] 'tis told you in the same p. 54. in *Sure-footing*, that 'tis by *so oft repeated Sensations*; which (in the foregoing page, where that discourse begins) is explained to bee, by *Impressions upon the Senses, not made once but frequently, and in most, many times every day*; and that *to make those more express and apt to bee taken notice of, their lives are to bee fram'd by the Precepts they hear and conformable Examples they see*. All this is impli'd in the words [*thus fixt*] as found in that place; which therefore being very prudent in your generation, you demurely omitted; else it had seem'd no great Paradox (which 'tis your constant endeavour to make mee still speak) that *no one man*, unlesse mad or much diseased, can forget what hee daily experiences in others
and

others and practices himself. But, grant all true you pretend to, and that every man must needs have or retain the knowledge of Christs doctrine however imprinted; yet, do I any where say that *no man can act against knowledge*, and so *relinquish Tradition*, and by that means turn *Apostate* or *Heretick*? when you find that Position in mee, cite it, and let us see it, otherwise barely to alledge mee saying they cannot but *know* it, argues not I say they must necessarily *follow* it. The last of those four Citations which you bring for this point p. 166. immediately follows this first (now discuss) in *Sure footing* p. 54. whence it concerns the same matter, namely the Indelibility of Knowledges thus fixt out of the Soul of one single man; as is Evident to him that reads the passage in it's proper place; though false dealing bee so naturall to you, you assure the Reader p. 166. that in *the full career of my bumbast Rhetorick I deliver it* (that is, as you express it a little before the Impossibility *that Tradition should fail in any one single person*) *roundly without fear or wit*; whereas neither there nor in that whole Discourse is there one syllable concerning Traditions being *adher'd* to or not *adher'd* to, (this Subject beginning the next Discourse in these words, *All this is well, may some say, in case Tradition had been ever held to*) but onely of it's *Certainty* or *Regulative virtue*, founded on naturall Knowledges imprinted by frequented Sensations in such a manner

as is impossible to bee blotted out in one single Testifier or part of Tradition. I am loath to think or say too hardly of you, Sir, onely I say 'tis strange a meer Chance should produce so constant an Effect of perverting my Evident Sense (oft times words too) in each passage. It may bee the reason of your mistaking mee here and in some other passages was this, I minded not *Rhetorick* at all, but onely *Sense*; & you, (as became a solid Confuter) minded not the *Sence* at all but onely the *Rhetorick*: which by mee was never aim'd at either there or in any other part of my Book: If what I write bee *Truth*, and my Expression *Intelligible*, I have my End; and can without Envy permit you to dress up your own Falshoods in the gingle of periods and empty flourishes.

The second place brought to make mee *liberally acknowledge* that it follows from my Principles *no man* can possibly relinquish Tradition is found in you p. 165, and 166. and thus; *Since no man can hold contrary to his knowledge, nor doubt of what hee holds, nor change or innovate without knowing hee doth so, it is a manifest Impossibility a whole Age should fall into an absurdity so inconsistent with the nature of one single man.* Is here any liberall acknowledgment that no man can *desert Tradition*? Or is there a word here to that purpose? but onely, that no man can *doubt of or hold the contrary* to *what hee knows*, nor go about so visible an action as *innovating* without knowing hee does so;

with which yet may well consist that not only *one single man* but *all mankind* may (for any thing is there said) knowingly and wilfully desert Tradition and turn *Apostates*. I wonder, learned Sir, what you are akin to that Philosopher who maintain'd *Snow* was black ! you have so admirable a faculty of identifying the most disparate nay contrary notions ; and by a knack of placing things in false lights, make even Propositions which signifie the self-same, become perfect Contradictions.

The third place of mine, which you say must make mee *liberally acknowledge it a genuine consequence from my Principles that 'tis impossible one single man should relinquish Tradition*, is cited by you p. 166. from *Sure-footing* p. 87. That *it is perhaps impossible for one single man to attempt to deceive posterity*, to which you add in another Letter [by renouncing Tradition]. It had been better in such nice points to put down my own words, especially when you put them in a different Letter. Mine are, *'Tis perhaps impossible that they should mislead posterity in what themselves conceit to bee true* ; which is different from the Words and Sense you represent for mine ; for many weak persons by Sophistry or fine words pretended from Scripture and baptiz'd *God's Word*, may bee inveigled to *conceit* that Tradition is false ; in which case should they *renounce Tradition*, yet they would not therefore mislead posterity from what they *conceit true* ;
which

which is all I there say or undertake for. But, the main is, you represent mee to say, 'tis perhaps impossible *in one single man*; which reaches any man whether good or bad; whereas my discourse there proceeds upon good and holy men onely. It begins thus p. 89. *For, supposing Sanctity in the Church, that is, that multitudes in it make heaven their first love — had those Fathers, (that is those Holy men) misled Posterity, &c.* and then follow some of the words you cite, I mean all of them that are mine. This being so, bee Judge your self, Sir, whether (bating you the *perhaps*, and speaking *absolutely*) it bee not impossible for one good and holy man to mislead posterity in what he conceits to be true; and whether it may not consist well enough with this branch of my discourse, that great multitudes may turn *bad*, that is, chuse some false good for their last end; and then, out of affection to that, disre gard what's true, what's false, and mislead their children contrary to their own knowledge.

You say p. 171. that *the onely thing I offer in that discourse to prevent this Objection is this Sure-footing. p. 65. 'Tis not to bee expected but some contingencies should have place where a whole Species in a manner is to bee wrought upon, &c.* And, had there been no more, mee thinks it might have made you wary to challenge mee with the direct contrary, had you not resolv'd to lay the necessity of my contradicting my self in every passage for one of your *first Principles*

to confute mee with. But I offer'd far more and more obvious preventions than that. See the immediate *Conclusion* from my *Grounds* put down by your self p. 162. which one would think should inform you best what is the most *genuine consequence* from the same Principles; *This put, it follows as certainly that a GREAT NUMBER OR BODY of the first Beleevers, and after-faithful in each Age, would continue to hold themselves, and teach their children as themselves had been taught, that is, would follow and stick to Tradition, &c.* Does a *great number or Body* signifie *all*, not one excepted, which you falsely put upon mee? How disingenuous a proceeding is this; to perswade your Reader those are *not* my Consequences from my Principles which I make my self, but those which you make for mee? and how do you make them? by perverting constantly my words and sense. Again, you know I had writ a discourse, declaring how Heresies came to bee introduc't, and therefore one would think any sober Confuter that were not bent upon Cavill, ere hee had challeng'd mee to hold that *no one man could possibly turn Heretick*, that is, that *no Heresie could possibly come in*, should have look't first in that place to see how and by what means I made Heresies *actually come in*. But you were resolv'd beforehand what to do; that is, to make mee speak contradictions, and so it was not your Interest to see it or take notice of it. Otherwise, there

you

you had seen mee prevent all the imputations which you by virtue of your forg'd monosyllable [All] had put upon mee. See Sure-footing, p. 66. We will reflect how an Heresie is first bred. Wee must look then on Christs Church not onely as on a Congregation, having in their hearts those most powerful motives — able of their own Nature to carry each single heart possess'd by them, — but as on the perfectest form of a Common-wealth, having within her self Government and Officers to take care all those Motives bee ACTUALLY APPLY'D AS MUCH AS MAY BEE to the subject Laity; and that all the sons of the Church, &c. — notwithstanding, it happens sometimes that, because 'tis impossible the perfection of discipline should extend it self in so vast a multitude to every particular, some one or few persons by neglect of applying Christian motives to their souls, fall into extravagancies, &c. — and — if Governours bee not vigilant and prudent, draw other curious or passionate men into the same faction with themselves, which words would have clearly shown you that, for want of due application, (which was one of the requisites my demonstrations went upon) the Cause fell short of producing its effect of adhering to Tradition. And this you might have seen neerer hand, namely, in the foregoing Discourse, the very same which pretended to demonstrate; where, speaking of the Application of the Cause to the Patient p. 63. 64. 65. I end thus: In a

word, Christianity urg'd to execution, gives its followers a new Life, and a new Nature; than which a neerer Application cannot bee imagin'd. So that you see I make account it's *Application* depends upon it's being *urg'd to Execution*; and what is it that urges things to *Execution*, but *Government* and *Discipline*? I wish, Sir, when you are to confute a rational Discourse, you would not stand running after Butter-flies, and catching by the way childishly at this little word, and the other little word, to play upon them jestingly; but have patience to read it thorough, and take the whole substance of it into your head, and so endeavour to speak to it solidly. This is the way to benefit your Readers, (to whom you owe this duty) may a far better to credit your self with understanding men, than all those petty tricks of impertinent Wit, and ironical Expressions, which you so passionately dote upon.

I am heartily weary of so illiberal a task as to spend ink and paper, much less time, in discovering mens defects; and I assure you, Sir, I am very sorry your carriage made it necessary; whereupon, though I see much rubbish of this nature behind, and have overslipt too very much, yet I should have ended, did not I find my self highly concern'd to defend one Assertion of mine, *than which* you (who use no *hot phrases*, but are all Civility and Sweetness) say p. 173. *nothing can be more impudent*; I humbly thank
you

you, Sir. This most impudent position is this, that *Sure-footing*, p. 65. being to meet with the Objection, that *there have been many Hereticks or deserters of Tradition*, I say, If wee look into *Histories* for experience of what has past in the world since the first Planting of Christianity, wee shall find far more particulars fail in propagating their kind than their faith. Now, Sir, if this bee prov'd not at all impudent, which you judge most impudent, I hope the rest, which you judge less impudent, may easily pass for blameless.

Let's to work then, and because 'tis your business as well as mine, I beseech you lend mee your thoughts to go along with mine from one end of the 7th. discourse in *Sure-footing* to the other, Company may do much in making them attentive; otherwise, I see plainly they will stand loitering and gazing by the way at this odd word, or the inelegancy of that phrase; or noting some passages that may bee prettily mistaken and make excellent good sport; by which means You who as you say p. 292. are apt to *unbend your brains without bidding*, will hardly ever bee drawn to go forwards with a deliberate pace half the way. In the said discourse then p. 65. you see I design to clear an objection of my own which I conceiv'd obvious, namely that *there have been actually many Hereticks or deserters of Tradition*. I make my way to it p. 66. by asserting that the way of Tradition is as efficaciously establisht in the very grain of

mans nature as what seems most naturall, the propagation of their kind : Hence I come at last to that *most impudent* assertion that *more have faild in propagating their kind than their Faith.* Proceeding to proove it, I show p. 66. how *Hereſy*, or a failing to propagate Faith, happens; and, I allow p. 68. that it muſt bee perform'd by *deſerting Tradition*, and chuſing (at leaſt for a ſhow) another Rule, that ſo they may have occaſion to break from the former Church. But I affirm withall p. 65. §. 3. that aſſoon as the breach is ſufficiently made, and the novelliſts begin to bee ſhap't into a body, whatever for a ſhow they ſtill would ſeem to keep to, yet that they preſently deſert the new Rule they had taken up, *and the naturall way of Tradition again recovers it ſelf*; that, *the Reformers themſelves make uſe of it to keep their company together*; that, *Children are taught they are to beleeve their Paſtors and Fathers even in interpreting Scripture*; that *the firſt Reformers puniſh them if they break from their body, and hold not to the ſence of Scripture they give them.* And hence I conclude p. 74. that *the number of the Actuell deſerters of the naturall way of Tradition have been but few, to wit, the Firſt Revolters that the deſcendents of theſe Revolters follow'd the way of Tradition, however miſplac't*; then I added ſome conſiderations for Grounds to ballance the number of Failers in propagation with the number of thoſe who faild in Tradition; and as reaſons why I concluded this number leſs:

but you never use to speak to my reasons; onely you mistake my discourse and my conclusion to mean not onely the *First breakers*, but their *descendents* too, which I make account return naturally to the Traditionary way; then you denie and impugn like a learned logician, the Conclusion it self, amplify strangely upon your own mistake of it, instancing in all the Countries almost East, West, North and South; triumph mightily, and would have mee show you a whole nation that refus'd to marry: As if my Conclusion could not bee true, unless such a rare sight were show'd you all at a clap.

E're I come closer to the proof of my Assertion I foresee I am to make good first that even the deserters of Tradition, when they think themselves sufficiently enfranchiz'd from the disciplin of the former Church and that their followers settle into a kind of Body under them, bring in again the way of Tradition, or rather indeed permit nature to work both in the new brood that grow up under those Fathers who had lately deserted Tradition, and in those deserters themselves: nothing being more naturall than both for the Fathers, Elders or Governours, to desire and even expect the children, Posterity and Subjects should follow their judgments, and not to make themselves wiser than their betters; nor for the descendents and young ones credulously to beleieve those whom they look't upon ever with an awe and respect, and to permit their lives to bee fram'd by *their* conduct. I
affirm

affirm then that even in all those Sects that have
 faln from the Catholick Church, whether Pro-
 testants, Lutherans, Presbyterians, or whatever
 else they bee that pretend to hold to Scripture,
 the Generality if not all are continu'd to the
 former body or immediately foregoing Genera-
 tion by Tradition, and not by virtue of Scrip-
 ture Evidence uniting their understandings. For
 what a wild conceit it is to imagin that the
 Children throughout a whole Kingdom of *Luthe-
 rans* for example, should still light to interpret
 Scripture just as did their Forefather Lutherans
 and thence unanimously hold to the Lutheran
 Profession? And the same in Protestants, Pres-
 byterians, Arians, Pelagians. And the like
 may bee said in some sort even of Turks and
 Heathens, that 'tis not the virtue of any motive
 that they go upon which keeps up a Succession
 of men of the same Tenet, but the natu-
 rall force of *Education* at first and *Custom* after-
 wards; which wee experience daily to have
 so strange a Power, that the most evident Argu-
 ments are scarce able to wean persons, otherwise
 very rationally, from the most absurd and weakly
 grounded Prejudices; and that to root out
 judgments thus planted from their Souls, seems
 as violently to shock and strain nature in them
 as if one went about to tear a limb from their
 Body. If it bee acknowledged then, as it must,
 that *Education* has such an incomparable force
 in preserving an unanimouness between Fore-
 goers

goers and Posterity, and Education consists in making the descendents think & act as did their Forefathers, wee shall discover that *Education* hath in it the very nature of *Tradition*; and consequently, that 'tis by virtue of *Tradition* any Sect continues the same; which devolves into this, that, therefore, as soon as any Sect is form'd it returns or slides back (if it continues) naturally into the way of *Tradition*.

I am afraid, Sir, by this time you are ready to object (for 'tis your way, out of an over-zealous affection to find Absurdities in your Adversary, to catch at any thing that seems so at first sight without maturely weighing it) that by this means I make all Protestants, Quakers, nay Turks and Heathens too of our Religion, by making them follow our Rule of Faith, Tradition; and you have a little to that purpose p. 147. and elsewhere much more if I remember right. But, Sir, I shall undeceive you easily, by distinguishing between *Tradition* taken at large, or as I call it *Sure-footing* p. 74. *the natural way of Tradition*, and *Christian Tradition*. That has the abetment, and Concern of many Natural ties to make it follow'd, and in Publick and universally-concerning matters of fact, it layes a kind of force upon man's Nature, as in the Existence of *William* the Conquerour, *Mahomet*, *Alexander*, &c. This has, besides, Supernatural Assistances of the Holy Ghost, to strengthen the greatest force of Nature. But to omit other
disse-

differences, what concerns us most at present, is, that *This* pretends to be an Uninterrupted Derivation from Christ, whence 'tis call'd *Christian* Tradition; whereas any other, for example *yours* in following your Fore-fathers, can pretend uninterruptedness no farther than your *first Reformer*; whose immediate Ancestors being Catholik, your chain is broke, or at an end; whence, for the same reason, this short-lin'd Tradition ought to be called *his*, (for example the *Lutheran*) and not *Christian* Tradition. The more therefore you, or any other adhere to any *other* Tradition, so much farther you recede from, and are more obstinate against *Christian* Tradition; since, doing so, you hold more firmly to that which was a renouncing the other.

These rubs remov'd, wee advance to our point, which is to examin whether, in likelihood, more particulars have fail'd propagating their *Kind* than their *Faith*. To do this the shorter and clearer wee will pitch upon one Instance which your self mention, namely, of the vast multitudes which since *Luther*, in *Germany, Denmark, Sweden, England, Scotland, Ireland, &c.* have renounc't the *Roman-Catholik* Faith. And, since by our former Discourse and indeed common Sense, none in any of those Countries were *Actual Deserters* of Tradition (by which I mean *Catholik* or *Christian Tradition*) but those who once *held it*, which their Descendents did not, but either follow'd Tra-
dition

dition at large, or *their* Tradition, that is the Tradition of what these Deserters educated them to, hence wee are to exclude all the innumerable Descendents from those *Actuall Deserters*, as persons unconcern'd at all in my Discourse, my expresse words ever excluding them. And, because those Deserters began not all with *Luther*, but some fell 20. some 40. years after him, I will put my self upon the disadvantage to put them all to be fall'n sooner, to wit, about 20. years after *Luther*: it being all one to our Case, for no more could fall but all those that actually then did fall (in regard wee allow their Descendents to continue their Fathers steps) though wee put them to fall all at once. Imagin then that in the Year 1537. all were fall'n that did fall either *then, before*, (I mean, before that Year, since *Luther*) and *after* that time; what proportion may wee conceive they might bear to all Catholikes then living whether in the *Greek* or *Roman* Church, whether in those parts of the world or *America*, whose Conversion was then well begun? I conjecture wee should be very liberrall to grant they equal'd one third (that is were the fourth) part of those who were found living, in the Year assign'd and adhering to Tradition.

This laid, let us consider next how many wee may conceive to have *fail'd* in that Year and ever since that is for 128. Years *in propagating their* kind. And first wee will take a view of those
who

who die by naturall Deaths or Casualties, before they enter into the ordinary Circumstance of Propagation, *Marriage*; and yet conduct, in their proportion, to the instilling Faith into those they convert with. For, as soon as any arrive to that pitch of age as to express themselves Christianly in their Language and Behaviour, 'tis evident they comaturally insinuate into others of an inferiour pitch they converse with, to their slender Degree, the same things they hold and practise; and so are truly parts of the Church Essential as *delivering*, or parts of *Tradition*; and, though wee might begin much sooner to reckon them such, yet wee will to avoid dispute take them from the age of 14. to 24. before which time if any marry, there are as many that marry later, and if this be not enough to ballance it to an Equality wee will allow all lay-people that live unmarried, and all that marry and yet die before they have children or never have any, into the bargain. Those then between the age of 14. and 24. reckoning the whole time of man's life 90. Years, are the 9th. part of mankind that were found living in our Age. Putting then all the present Livers in that Age to die in the Year wee pitch't upon (that so wee may for clearness reduce our Discourse to the same determinate compass of time) wee may well put the 9th. part of mankind living in that Year to die between 14. and 24. that is, to die without conducing to propagate their kind,

though

though they contribute to propagate their Faith; and, if this number bee thought too great, because of the healthfulness of that Age, wee will account it but a tenth part, though in truth it deserves to bee held rather an 8th. or 7th. because of the numerousness of that Decad in comparison of the persons found Living in those Decads, beginning from the 60th. 70th. and the 80th. Year, which are very few. Certain then 'tis according to our best morall Estimation a tenth part of mankind within that prefixt Year die (I mean a tenth part of those who do then die) who have had a hand in propagating Faith and not their Kind. Next, let us multiply that tenths part by the number of the Years elapst since, that is, from the Year 1537. that is for 128. Years, and 'tis plain that wee shall have 128. tenths, that is near 13. times as many as liv'd in that whole Year. Wherefore, the Actual Deserters of Tradition reaching but to one 4th. of the mankind that liv'd in that Year as was shown above, it follows that the number of those since *Luther*, who dy'd without propagating their kind amounts to 4. times thirteen times, that is, above 50. times more than those who *actually deserted Tradition since that time* or those who fail'd to propagate their Faith.

Again, let us weigh the multitudes found in any one Year to belong to the whole Ecclesiastical Body of the Catholik Church, wherever

extended, with the innumerable Companies of
the several Religious Orders of men and women
with their Lay-Attendants, and consider what
proportion they may be held to bear to the
whole Body of the Church living in the same
Year, and so, to those that die in that Year: That
wee may not exceed, wee will allot them to take
up but a four hundredth part of the Church
nay (that wee may no more be troubled with
Mr. Tillotsons uncharitable railery p. 172. 173.)
wee will allow them to amount but to a five
hundredth part of those who liv'd or dy'd in that
Year wee pitcht on; that is there died that Year
only a five hundredth part of the Church that
propagated their Faith and not their kindred
which low number is a most advantageous Con-
cession of ours, if wee take out as wee ought
all those that dy'd from 14. to 24. formerly
spoken of. But, bee it only a five hundredth
part; yet this multiply'd by 128. the number
of the Years since, there being four times 128
found in 500. rises to bee a full fourth part of
the Totall living in the Year 537. that is full as
many as were the *Actuall deserters* of Tradition
since Luther. Add, that the persons now insister
on (of whom wee might double the number,) are
all of them absolutely the most Eminent part
of Tradition that are, viz. the whole entire
Body of the Church Governours or *Ecclesiastice*
cens; a very few of whom experience has
taught us to have been able to propagate our
Holy

Holy Catholik Faith to many Nations in a few Years; the rest such whose exemplary devout lives exhibit the practice of Christianity in so eminent a perfection, and with such influence over the hearts of the Generality, that next to the Sacred Authority, and Exalted Sanctity of the others, nothing more fruitfully propagates Christian Life and Doctrin than those who are thus barren to the world.

Thus much for the number of Propagaters of their Faith, and not their Kind amongst those who were formerly Catholikes; but what a strange counterpoise does it add, if wee go about to compute those vast Nations which since *Luther* have of new accru'd to Tradition, and who have been spiritually *geniti in Evangelio*; and this, (which enhances our Advantage) not by Lineall Descendents in the same place, but a few Externs, and in such places, to wit, Heathenism, where there has been no Deserters of Tradition formerly, nor any since to diminish their number by their counterballance. Whence I have title to add not onely the first Adherers to Catholik Religion there, but also all their Posterity since who have stuck to it, they being Cleavers to Tradition, and so counterdistinguish't to Relinquishers of Tradition. Which if wee compute ever since the time about *Luther*, who can averr (considering the vastness of the Territories they possess) they equall not the Totall of the Deserters of Tradition that have been

from the beginning of the Church.

One Consideration is yet more than all the rest; but, I must not lay claim to it at present lest I break bargain, having confin'd my self to the circumstance of time since *Luther*; yet 'tis not unlawfull to mention it. 'Tis this; that for diverse Centuries before *Luther* there had not been any considerable number of Actuall Deserters of Tradition, (as who is read in Ecclesiasticall Histories cannot but know) but almost all Followers of it; that is, Propagaters of it practically to the immediately undergrowing Faithfull. During which time if wee calculate how many; both in those lay-persons who dyed from 14. to 24. and all those Religious and Sacred Persons; the best Propagaters of Faith fail'd in propagating their kind, it will bee very difficult (I had almost said, most impudent) to deny but they unproportionably almost exceed the number of the Actuall Deserters of Tradition that have been since Christ. For I see no reason to judge by what I have read in Ecclesiasticall History, that the number of the Actuell Relinquishers of the Church have exceeded the number of the Churches Totall, taken in any determinate time, thrice repeated; If you can shew there were more, you may please to acquaint us with the sight. In the mean time I hope you understand by this time my position so secure that I can allow you 40. times as many and yet fear no danger of being most impudent.

You may alledge perhaps this is but an Evazion now, but was not my Sense when I writ. To which I answer, I have shown it to have been my meaning already out of my plain words, and whoever reads *Sure-footing* p. 74. and 75. shall see there expressly the Grounds laid for each branch of this discourse: which, Sir, had you been pleas'd to read over with a mind, to admit them into your understanding faculty, you might have sav'd mee this labour of dilating on them, and your self the blemish of ranting against a position as that *than which nothing can be more impudent*, which onely your carelessness to read it, or resolution not to heed it, hinder'd from being *most innocent*.

It were not unseasonable perhaps, if I should here amuse you with another Paradox, namely that the *deserting Tradition strengthens* it; I mean, that, Tradition, when a Heresy arises, gains more of Intensiveness and vigor, than it loses in it's Extensiveness; nay that the Intensiveness which accrues to it by that means is the way to make it branch out afterwards into a far greater Extent. I begin my Explication of this from your words p. 176. *If I should see a whole nation fail because no body would marry or contribute to propagate &c.* By which I perceive you misunderstand the nature of the things in hand. In the business of *marriage* there is nothing to contrast with it on the other side, but being naturall and held withall a holy state, they that

will (that is, they who will not voluntarily oblig themselves to another holier) may undertake it ; whence it has no Universal Opposit , and takes it's free course , when convenient , and liable onely to common Contingencies. But in things of *Corrupt Nature* and *Grace* , the matter is carry'd quite otherwise ; and , because either side has a great opposition against the other , and withall a *very great* , or rather a kind of *Universal* sway and force , hence the course of such things consists in a kind of *Undulation* : So that , now *Corrupt Nature* when shee finds her self a little more free , follows her own tendency or propensity , and bears downwards ; and now again Supernatural and Gracious Assistancess with which the Wisdome of the Eternal Father has furnish't his Church superabundantly , being shock't and excited even by this contrary motion of Nature , begin to put themselves forward into an opposit motion , and strive more vigorously to raise themselves upwards. For example *Disciplin* , which is to *apply* Christian motives , by tract of time grows remiss in the Church ; hence decay of virtue , dissoluteness of life , addiction to material goods , and , consequently Ignorance creep in by insensible degrees into diverse parts so that it happens there are multitudes of corrupt Members in the Church , and regardless of any duty ; who , therefore , want nothing but a fair occasion , and one to lead them to break all ties of Virtue and Obedience , and run into the utmost

utmost Extravagancies. Nor can wee think but in the course of such a vast variety as is found in a World, now and then there will bee found amongst those wicked men some notable fellow, of a subtle wit, a bold spirit, and a plausible tongue, so circumstanc't that hee can hope for Impunity by the friendship of some great person, and so dares give way to his proud desire of having followers, or his private spleen, to renounce the Church's Faith, and shake of the yoke of her disciplin. Hereupon, the rampires of Government and disciplin being forc't and violently broken down, presently like a Torrent or Inundation all those whose hearts were corrupted with spiritual pride, or other vices, like brute beasts, leap after one another out of the Fold of the Church, and threaten to trample down all that's Sacred; Reviling the Church, and laying to her charge all the faults found in particular persons, as if they were Effects of her Doctrin; though their own knowledge tell them otherwise; and make use of failings in particular Governours to renounce and extirpate the Government it self.

On the contrary those good Catholikes who by this *Trial* are *made manifest*, stir up their zeal both in behalf of their Faith and their Governours, instituted by Christ; and detest the vicious Lives and Pride of those Rebels, the Parents of such a horrid Revolt. The Governours, alarm'd, begin to look into the Cause

of this distraction, and to provide wholesome Remedies. They call Councils (Generall ones if need bee) to straiten afresh Ecclesiasticall Disciplin ; enjoyning the Officers of the Church to stand every one to his Charge. They take order to promote worthy Officers, and to advance Ecclesiastical Learning; they recommend afresh by their grave Authority the points of Faith, to the *Ecclesia Credens*, as the *depositum* preserv'd uninterruptedly in the Church from Christ and his Apostles ; and establish them in a particular beleef of them ; nay make these more intelligible and rational by Explicating them more at large ; or, if the Heretical party involve and confound them in ambiguous words, they *define* and *declare* them in language most properly futing to the sence writ in the hearts of the Faithfull ; and, lastly, anathematize the Revolters, if they prudently judge their contumacy irreducible ; that, so, the remaining Body may concieve a just horror and aversion against that Rebellious party, and bee preserv'd uninfected with their contagious Communion. All which Advantages and much more are visibly found in the Change made in the Church by that never-enough-renowned Synod the Council of Trent occasion'd by *Luthers* fall. Nor is this all ; for the Faithfull not onely grow more virtuous by the reformation of Church-disciplin, but even by the Calumnies of their Adversaries : Again, the learned party in the Church are excited

ted to far greater industry, and consequently Knowledge, by the insulting opposition of the Churches enemies: whose disgracing points of Faith for absurd and contradictions, stir up divines to show their conformity with acknowledged naturall Truths; as does their calling into question the Ground and Certainty of Faith, open the understandings of those who defend it, to look into the Causes on which Gods sweet and strong Providence has founded it's infallible Perpetuity, and so demonstrate it. A task no Heretick durst ever attempt, finding Principles failing him to begin with; that is, Causes laid by Gods Providence to build his Congregation on; whence all they can do is to talk gaily and plausibly about the Conclusions themselves and laugh at Principles.

From which discourse is Evident that by occasion of a Heresy (which purifies the Church of all her ill humors, and rectifies and makes sound what remains) *Tradition* renews as it were it's Youth and recovers it's vigor; whence also it must needs Propagate and extend it self still unto more and more Subjects, as is also daily Experience't. 'Tis seen also that the abundance of corrupt Humors begets Heresy at First; for multitudes fall away *then*, whereas *afterwards* scarce two or three in any Age desert the Catholick Banner. It appears also that Secular interest or desire of Liberty and Spirituall Pride, not zeal of Truth begun and continu'd the breach; I

mean in the Leaders; for afterwads they are content to remain where they are without troubling themselves to propagate the Truth to other Nations; nay, they have let the *large region of Nubia* run to wrack (for as Mr. T. to make us smile, tells us p. 174. *Alvarez* sayes, it was for want of *Ministers*) and never sent so much as one single Protestant Parson to assist them. It shows also, how unconcern'd the Catholik Churches Stability is in all the Heresies that have or shall fall; since they onely tend to confirm and radicate more deeply in the hearts of the Faithfull the Points of Faith they renounet; to occasion reformation of disciplin and so to purify their virtue. Lastly, it shows how Tradition or the Delivery of Faith by the Living Voice and Practice of the Catholik Church is so immovably planted by the hand of the Almighty, that it loses nothing by all the Actuell Deserters of it that ever have been; but is by that means onely prun'd of it's saples branches to shoot out in due season livelier and farther. But, to return my Friend.

I hope Sir you will pardon mee if I have rather taken pains to open your understanding alittle in acquainting it more fully with that part of my doctrin is totally mistook, than to proceed with your Faults; in lieu of which I here pardon you all the Injuries you have done my meaning or words in neer the other half your book, that is from p. 176. to p. 300. though I see them

them many, and some of them very gross ones. The Testimony part I would not *here* neglect, because as you shall see shortly, they concern not my book as any *proofs* of the point, and so are improper to bee allow'd room in my future Answer: which designs nothing but against your reasons. You are resolv'd to bee brief in them, and I hope to bee briefer; in which, I thank you, you have helpt mee much by your manner of handling them. I will pass by divers of your little quirks upon my whether real or pretended mistakes in things unconcerning, and onely touch upon what is more pertinent.

And first, I am sorry I must begin with the old complaint that you mistake quite (whether purposely or no let others judge) what was my intent in producing those Testimonies. Can you really and in your heart think they were intended against the Protestants, that you set your selves so formally to answer them? or can you judge mee so weak a Disputant as to quote against you the 2d. Council of *Nice* or the Council of *Trent* so elaborately; whereas I know you would laugh at their Authority as heartily as you did at my First Principles? Sure if I meant it I am the First Catholick Controvertist that ever fell into such an error. My intent, manifest in the Title and the whole course of my writing there was this, that having deduc't many particulars concerning the Rule of Faith
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which manner of Explication might seem new to Catholik Controvertists, I would endeavour to shew to them rather than to you that both others of old, and the Catholik Church at present favourd my Explication. This was my main scope, however, as divers Testimonies gave mee occasion, I apply'd them by the way against Protestants.

Your second mistake is found p. 304. where you accuse mee to have *committed as shamefull a circle*, &c. and why, because according to mee Scripture depends upon Tradition for it's Sense, and yet I bring Scripture for Tradition. Sir, my Tenet is, that nothing can fence Scripture with the *Certainty* requisit to build Faith upon but Tradition; which yet well consists with this, that both you and I may use our private wits to discourse topically what fence the words seem most favourably to bear. And you may see I could mean no more by the many deductions I make thence alluding to my Tenet, which yet I am far from your humour of thinking all to be pure *God's Word or Faith*, nor yet *Demonstration*, as you put it upon mee in other Testimonies p. 308. Though I make account I use never a Citation thence, but to my judgment I durst venture to defend in the way of human skill, proceeding on such Maxims as are us'd in word-skirmishes, to sound far more favourably for mee than for you.

But let's see what work you make with my

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Authorities. After you have unworthily abus'd
Rushworth, in alledging him rawly to say *Scripture is no more fit to convince, than a Beetle is to cut withall*, whereas his Discourse runs thus, that as hee who maintains a Beetle can cut must cut with it, but cannot in reason oblige others to do so; so they who *hold Scripture is the true Judge of Controversies, and fit and able to decide all quarrells and dissentions against the Christian Faith, bind themselves, &c.* After this prank (I say) of the old stamp, you put down p. 303. three of my Testimonies from Scripture, and immediately give a very full and ample Answer to them all in these words. *From which Texts if Mr. S. can prove Tradition to bee the onely Rule of Faith, any more than the Philosopher Stone or the Longitude may bee prov'd from the 1 Cap. of Genesis, I am content they should pass for valid Testimonies.* To which my parallell Answer is this. *From which Reply, and our constant experience of the like formerly; if it bee not evident that Mr. T. will never with his good will deal sincerely with his Adversary, but in stead of confuting him, impose on him still a False meaning, and impugn that in stead of him, I will yeeld all his frothy Book to be solid Reason.* I beseech you, Sir, where do you find mee say or make shew of producing those Testimonies to prove *Tradition the onely Rule of Faith.* For Truth's sake use your Eyes and read. Do not I express my self *Sure-footing* p. 126. to produce the
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the first Citation to show how Scripture *seconds* or abets my foregoing Discourse meerly as to the *Self-evidence* of the Rule of Faith. Does not the second contend for the *Orality* of the Rule of Faith, it's *Uninterruptedness*, and *perpetuall Assistance of God's Spirit*, and the third of imprinting it by the way of living Sense in *men's hearts*? And, though I say those places speak not of *Books*, but deliver themselves in words not competent to another Rule, yet I contend not they *exclude* another Rule, or say there is but *one Rule* and no more. There was indeed p. 12. another Testimony from *St. Paul*, contradistinguishing the *Law of Grace* from *Moses his Law*, which sounded exclusively; but you were pleas'd to omit it, and so I shall let it stand where it did.

You advance to my Testimonies from Fathers and Councils, and never was young gentleman so fond and glad that hee had found a hare sitting as you are to have discoverd whence I had those Citations: Presently *Ad prae,* *Ad arg,* all is mirth and triumph and Jubilee. You are a Seer, Sir, and will find out the Truth by Revelation, and so I had as good ingenuously confess it. 'Twas thus then. When my book was nere printed, some Friends, who had read my *discourses*, dealt with mee to add some Authorities; alledging that, in regard I follow'd a way of Explication which was unusuall, it would give it a greater currency to show it consonant, though

though not in the whole Body of it, yet in the most concerning particulars to the Sentiments both of the former and present Church. I foresaw the disadvantage my little time would necessarily cause me ; yet, willing to defer to the Judgment of my Betters, I resolv'd it. Casting about in what Common-place-book I might best look, for I had not time to rummage Libraries, nor am I so rich as to have a plentiful one of my own, it came into my mind there were diverse of that nature in that book where you made so fortunate a Set, and caught such a covey of Citations in one net together. I ask't first the Authour's leave, who answer'd, that when a Book was once made publick it was any one's that would use it; nor knew I, till you came to teach mee more manners, I ow'd any account to any man else; neither do I think your self in your Sermons stand quoting all the Common-place-books or private Authours where you meet a Testimony or Sentence transcrib'd you make use of. Hereupon I took the book with mee to a Friend's Chamber near the Press, where Proofs already expected my correcting hand; and there, having no other book by mee, fell to work. This hast made mee examin nothing, being very secure of the perfect sincerity of the Authour I rely'd on, but put them down in his words and order. This, Sir, is candidly the true History of that affair, which will spoil much of your discourteous vapour, showing a great deal
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of empty vanity in you, to magnifie so highly such petty trifles, and so totally unconcerning the main of the business. You laugh p. 305. that I who confest my self a *bad Transcriber*, transcrib'd him; how childish a Cavill is this? As if every one who is to bring Testimonies, whether hee like his task or no, must not *transcribe* them from some place or other; yet you tell mee ironically, you *will do mee the right to assure the Reader* (that I) *do it very punctually and exactly*. I wish, to requite you, Sir, I *could assure the Reader* you had as *punctually and exactly transcrib'd mee*; you had sav'd a great deal of precious credit by it, and I a great deal of precious time and ungratefull pains in laying open your Insincerity. But, to our Testimonies.

The first is from the Synod of *Lateran*. The force of which you say p. 306. *lies in the word* [*deliver'd*] *which is indifferently us'd for conveyance by writings or word of mouth*. But, Sir, there are also in that Testimony the words *preaching* and *teaching*, and I do not beleieve it is so *Indifferent* to you whether you *preach* by *word of mouth* or no, that you should say the word *Preaching* sounds not conveyance of a thing orally.

The next Testimony has the same Exception, and the same Answer. But you say this Council particularly this part of the Epistle were excepted against by some. What matter's it, so they did

did not except against it for this passage or this Doctrin (which may serve for Answer also to the mistaking Exceptions against the 7th. General Councill which follows next) Thus *Origen* and *Tertullian* are both excepted against, yet are both commonly alledg'd and allow'd where the Reasons of those Exceptions have no place.

Next follow your Answers to the Fathers I alledg'd. But first p. 310. you must mistake *Rushworth*, next mee. For *Rushworth* speaks not (I mean in the first Citation) of *Delivery*, but of a point *delivered*; nor do I here intend to *convince* thence the Certainty of *Delivery* or *Tradition* which you proceed upon; for, making *Fathers* parts of *Tradition*, it would make the same thing prove it self. Understand then rightly, Sir, what I am about, and then I shall accept your impugning it for a favour. *The Truth of the thing* is one thing, and the *Judgment of a person concerning it*, is another; And 'tis not to evince the Truth of the point I produce these Testimonies, for in the order of Discoursing the Knowledge of Traditions (or *First Authority's*) Certainty, antecedes and gives strength to all the other inferiour and dependent ones. What I only aim at then is only to show that *thus they judg'd* (not to convince the Truth of the Thing from their Judgment) and thence to show my self not to be *singular* in thus judging. Whence also 'tis that I entituled this part *Consent of Authority*, &c. Retract then, I beseech you, Sir, any such

such thoughts or expressions as that I would hence *convince Tradition to be the whole Truth of Faith, demonstrate, prove it*: For I intend to prove no more by the rest then by those from the Council of Trent, which onely aim to show that so and so that Council said and held.

The First Testimony of a Father is Pope *Celestines*; the force of which you think quite spoild (p. 310) by *Binnius his other Reading* of such a word. And why I pray? unless he could make it out his reading were true, the other false; which I see not attempted. But you let it pass, and answer that [*retain'd by Succession from the Apostles till this very time*] may mean *by Scripture, as well as by Orall Tradition*. I conceive not, and I give you my reason; because, who make *Scripture* their Rule, are unconcern'd whether their *Faith was retain'd to this very time from the Apostles by Succession*, or no: For, though all the world apostatiz'd; and so interrupted that *Succession*, yet, as long as they have the Letter of Scripture, it being *plain to all*, their Faith is retain'd still. What you quote this Father afterwards to say of Scripture, wee heartily say Amen to, so you mean by *Scriptures* that Book *sen't by its proper Interpreter* (as to points of Faith) the Church. And, you are to show he meant otherwise.

You choke with an &c. better half of *Irenæus* his Testimony p. 311. which spoils your answer to the first; for it speaks of his *present dayes* when

when the Scripture was not onely left by the Apostles, but spread and to bee had, and yet that *many nations of those Barbarians who beleieve in Christ, had (even then) salvation writ in their hearts without Characters and Ink, diligently keeping the ancient Tradition.*

The Substance of your Answer to Origen 312. is onely this, that unless I mean by *Churches Tradition preserv'd by order of Succession, mysticall interpretations of Scripture* so deliver'd down, you assure mee *Origen is not for my turn.* And I assure you, Sir, 'tis so learned an Answer that I dare not oppose it-

Tertullian is next, to whom by offering to wave him, you show your self 312. little a Friend; and no kindness is lost for hee is as little a Friend to you driving such as you in his Prescriptions from any Title to dispute out of or even handle Scripture, yet you say he saies no more but *beleieve what is* [*Traditum*] deliver'd; though as alledg'd by mee *Sure-footing* p. 133. hee sayes much more in a large intire Testimony which you not so much as mention. You tell mee also hee meant *deliver'd by the Scriptures*, but you strain hard to make it come in. And *Tertullian* is the unlikeliest man in the world to provoke to the Scriptures, who tells us (*de præscrip. c. 16.*) *Nihil proficit congressus Scripturarum, nisi plane ut aut Stomachi quis ineat everfionem, aut cerebri. Scripture-disputes avail nothing but meerly either to make ones Stomack or his head turn.*

But, alas, Sir how are you gravell'd with the two First Testimonies from *Athanasius* and how slightly you pass them over p. 313. The Protestants first maxim is *Beleeve no men, nor Ancestors nor Church, but search the Scriptures, that is seek for your Faith there*: Against which way his whole discourse is bent, as may bee seen surefoot: p. 133. 134. Is *Faiths* coming down by *Ancestours* the same as *coming down by a book*? or doe not the words, [*from Christ by Fathers*] mean [*by words expressing the Sense in their hearts,*] but [*by a book not to bee Senc't by them, but plain of it self?*] The third Testimony expressly saies. 'Tis to bee answer'd to those things [*which alone of it self suffices*] that those are not of the *Orthodox Church*, and that our *Ancestors* never held so. You tell mee it is a gross error that hee thought this alone (or without Scripture) might bee sufficient; I wonder what mean the words [*which alone of it self suffices* :] if they bee not exclusive of any thing else as *necessary*, words have lost their signification, and I my reason. I but, hee quotes Scripture for it afterwards! True; and hee expresses himself to do it lest Adversaries from his being wholly silent should take occasion to bee more impudent. That is, the reason of the thing requir'd it not, but the unreasonableness of the Carping humour of Adversaries. You alledge his words *That Faith which was profest by the Fathers in the Nicene Council according to the Scriptures* 315.

1. 3. 4. &c. *is to mee sufficient*, &c. Whence your discourse makes his *opinion* to bee that *Scripture* is the *sufficient Rule of Faith*. Lord? Sir, where are your thoughts wandring? or what's the Nominative Case in that clause [*is to mee sufficient*] to the word *is*? Is it not *that Faith*: to wit, the *Nicene*, which you mistake for the *Rule of Faith*, and joyn the Epithet, *sufficient*, to Rule of Faith, which in the Testimony is joyned to Faith? Your conceit that *it seems hence the Scripture was to him the Rule to judge the Creeds of Generall Councils* is a very weak one: hee told you before his Faith came to him by *Tradition of Ancestours*; all that is here intimated is that hee judg'd the *Nicene Creed* to be *according to the Scriptures*; and what Catholike judges not so of that and the Council of *Trent* too, and yet holds not *Scripture* which is to bee interpreted by the Church the *Rule and Standard to judge the Church by*? To use your own words p. 332. *You use a wretched importunity to perswade Testimonies to bee pertinent*; yet all will not do, and your too violent straining them makes them the more confess their naturall reluctance.

But now comes the Testimony of *Clemens Alexandrinus*, charg'd to be taken (not by mee, but by the Authour I borrowed it of) out of the middle of a long Sentence, and both before it and after it *Scripture* nam'd so as to make it quite opposit to our Tenet. I have already gi-

ven account of my action; and my Adversary, now become my Judge, charges it not wholly upon mee. Alas, I am not able to read the Testimonies in the books and understand them there, 'tis such a peece of mastery; and therefore am faine to take them upon trust from others that *can* read them there. But my *Seducer*, *how hee will acquit himself of so foul an Imputation is left to any Ingenuous Papist to judge* &c, Sir, let mee tell you, you should consider circumstances ere you come to lay on such heavy charges. I beseech you was the book in which this Seducer (forsooth) us'd this Testimony writ against Protestants who hold *Scripture, the Rule of Faith*, or against some Catholik Divines holding the Opinion of *Personall Infallibility*? Clearly against the later. This being so what was hee concern'd to transcribe the whole large Testimony, no wrong being done to them? either position of *Ecclesiasticall Tradition*, which hee cites, or of *Scripture* which hee cites not, equally making against that Tenet; or rather that passage of *Ecclesiasticall Tradition*, being far more efficacious upon them than that which concern'd *Scripture* which they account not obligatory unless interpreted by the Church. By this time the Reader will discern there was a great deal of rashness in the Accuser, but no Insincerity at all in the Alledger. Nor is there the least danger of the Testimonies following, upbraiding them who *patch together abundance of false*

false words and fictions that they may seem rationally not to admit the Scriptures; For what is this to us whose endeavours are to lay Grounds beginning from First Principles why wee and every man may and ought *rationally admit the Scriptures*; and neither make our Faith ridiculous by admitting into it what's uncertain, nor leaving any excuse to Atheisticall Impiety in not admitting what's Certain? This is the summe of my aim and endeavours, though nothing will content you, but that wee admit the Letter to bee plain to all, and, by consequence, to you; and then your Fancy is to bee accepted for God's Word, and your pride of understanding will bee well at ease.

You pass over nine of my Testimonies; two from *St. Basil*, and three from *St. Austin*, alledg'd by mee *Sure-footing* p. 135, 136, 137. one from *Irenæus*, and two from *Tertullian*, and another from *St. Peter Chrysologus*, *Sure-footing* p. 138, 139. sleighting them as but a few; whereas, speaking of Testimonies from the Fathers, as you do here, you had answer'd but eight in all; which you seem by your words to judge such a great multitude in comparison of 9, and those 9, or *those few which remain* (as you call them) so inconsiderable for their number in respect of the other numerous or innumerable 8, that the paucity of their number made them less deserve speaking to. Yet a careless generall kind of Answer you give such as it is p. 318. tel-

ling the Reader that *there is nothing of Argument in those few which remain, but from the ambiguity of this word Tradition*; which wee will needs take for *unwritten Tradition*. You add p. 318. that *you need not show this of every one of them in particular*; for, *whosoever shall read them with this Key, will find that they are of no force to conclude what hee drives at*. I was going, Sir, to use your own words, and to ask *with what face you could pretend this*? Let's bring the book; I'll undertake it shall not blush to tell you how careless you are of what you say. I omit that the word *Tradition* doth by Ecclesiasticall use signifie in the first place *unwritten Tradition*. Moreover, that wee may let Mercy triumph over Justice, wee will pardon the first Testimony; found p. 135. though St. Basil by counterposing *Tradition of Faith*, to the conceits of the Heretick *Eunomius* seems to mean by *Tradition* Sense receiv'd from Fathers attesting; this being the most opposit to Conceits or new-invented Fancies that can bee; for even an Interpretation of Scripture may bee a Conceit or Fancy newly invented, whereas what's barely deliver'd cannot bee such.

The 2d. is, the same St. Basil's p. 136. *Let Tradition bridle thee; Our Lord taught thus, the Apostles preach't it, the Fathers conserv'd it, our Ancestours confirm'd it, bee content to say as thou art taught*. Is not here enough to signifie *unwritten Tradition*? Did Christ teach it by reading

ding it in a *written Book* ? or the Apostles preach it by *book* or is the *perpetuating* it by *Fathers* and *Ancestours* the keeping it by way of *writing* ? The third is St. *Austin's* p. 136. *I will rather believe those things which are Celebrated now by the Consent of Learned and unlearned, and are confirm'd throughout all Nations by most grave Authority. Is universall consent and most grave Authority of all nations, the book of Scripture or written Tradition? or rather is it not most Evidently unwritten universall Tradition or Sense in the hearts of all Beleevers learned and unlearned, or the Church Essentiall?*

The 4th is from the same St. *Austin*. 'Tis manifest that the *Authority of the Catholick Church* is of force to cause *Faith and assurance*. Do these words [*Authority of the Catholick Church*] mean the *Book of Scriptures* ? Or can I desire more then this Father offers mee in expresse terms? or a greater Testimony that you are to seek for an Answer to it then the strange Evasion you substitute instead of a reply ? Especially if wee take the Testimony immediatly following, *which from the best establisht Seats of the Apostles even to this very day is strengthen'd by the Series of Bishops succeeding them; and by the Assertion of so many nations*. Is here the word *Tradition* pretended Indifferent and apt to bee taken ambiguously? and not rather *Assertions of so many nations, or Consent of nations, and Authority of the Catholick Church, of force to cause Faith and Assurance* ;

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rance? which to demonstrate is the whole Endeavour of Sure-footing.

The 5th is the same Fathers cited p. 137. *The Faithfull do possess perseveringly a Rule of Faith common to little and great in the Church.* Is the word *Church* the same with the word *Tradition* or in danger of being ambiguous, or (as you say of the word *Tradition* p. 318.) *commonly us'd by the Fathers to signify to us the Scriptures?*

The 6th. is of St. Irenæus. *All those who will hear Truth may at present perfectly discern in the Church the Tradition of the Apostles, manifest in the whole world.* What means the word [*at present*] but that the Tradition of the Apostles is yet vigorous and fresh in the Church? which remark had very unfitly suted with *Scriptures*.

The 7th and 8th are Tertullians. Both say the same Sence, that what is *establish'd as Sacred* or *profest* at this *present* day in the Churches of the Apostles is *manifestly deliver'd* by the Apostles or a *Tradition of the Apostles*; which is incompetent to Scripture, it not being a Tradition or point *delivered*, but the *Delivery*.

The last is of Chrysologus, which has indeed the word *Tradition*, but by the additionall words [*of the Fathers*] not left ambiguous but determin'd to unwritten Tradition: For the Fathers according to you are not to give, or deliver down the Sence of Scriptures, it being plain of it self.

This Sir, is the upshot of your skill in *Note-book*.

book-learning; the three first Testimonies from Scripture you answerd not, mistaking quite what they were brought for; the 4th you omitted. You have given pittiful answers to eight from the Fathers and shuffled off nine more without answer, pleading you had given us a Key to open them which was never made for those locks. By which I see you reserve your greatest *Kindnesses*, like a right friendly man, till the last.

You will not have the Council of Trent make Tradition *the onely Rule of Faith*; you had oblig'd mee, had you answer'd my reason for it in my 4th note p. 145. 146. But this is not your way; you still slip over my reasons all along as if none had been brought, and then say some sleight thing or other to the Conclusion, as if it had never been *inferrd* by mee, but meerly *gratis* and rawly affirm'd. I have explicated our Divines that seem to differ from mee herein, *Sure footing* p. 187. 188. and the Council it self takes my part in it, by *defining* and *practising* the taking the Sence of Scripture from that *quod tenuit & tenet Sancta Mater Ecclesia*, which, in this antecedency to Scriptures Sence, can no where bee had but from Tradition. You cavill at mee for *not putting down the words in which that Council declares it self to honour the Holy Scripture and Tradition with equall pious affection and reverence*. Why should I? you see I was very short in all my allegations thence and rather touch't

touch't at them for Catholicks to read them more at large, than transcrib'd them fully. But how groundless your Cavill is may bee understood hence that I took notice of a far more dangerous point to wit it's putting the Holy Scriptures constantly *before Tradition*, and shew'd good reason why? But you approve not even of any honour done to the Scriptures upon those Terms; and your interest makes you wish that rather it's *Letter* and *Sence* both should remain uncertain, than it should owe any thing to the Catholick Church. You ask how an Apostle and Evangelist *should bee more present by the Scripture* ascertain'd as to words and Sence *then by orall Tradition*? I answer, because that Book is in that case Evident to bee peculiarly and adequately his, whereas Orall Tradition was common to all; and 'tis doubtable what hand some of those Apostles or Evangelists might have had in the source of that which was lineally deriv'd to us.

Sir, I wonder how you hit so right once as not to answer likewise the Testimony I brought p. 152. of the Catholick Clergy's adhering to Tradition in the nick of the breach, you might as well have spoke to that as to the Council of *Trent* & divers others: But I perceive it had some peculiar difficulty, as had divers of the neglected nine, else your Genius leads you naturally to flie at any thing that has but the semblance or even name of a Testimony: whereas,

unactive I stoop at no such game till I see certainly 'tis worth my pains; and I fear yours will scarce prove so

They come in play p. 320. And because they are huddled together here something confusedly, it were not amiss to sort them under Dr. *Pierce's* Heads found *sure-footing*, p. 170.

To the first Head, which comprises those which are onely brought to vapour with, belongs that of St. *Hierom.* p. 323.

To the second Head, which consists of those which are *raw, unapply'd, and onely say something in common which never comes home to the point*, belong all those of *Eusebius*. That of St. *Chrysostome* and St. *Austin's* p. 324. of *Justin* and *Theodoret* p. 325. That of *Hilary* p. 327. of St. *Basil.* p. 328. of *Chrysostom.* p. 328. and 329. and those of St. *Austin* in the same place. Of *Theoph. Alexandr.* p. 330. *Theodoret* p. 330. 331. The 2d. and 3d. from *Gerson.* p. 331.

To the 4th. that of St. *Austin* p. 325.

To the 7th. Head, which comprises those which are false, and signifie not the thing they are quoted for, appertain that of *Ireneus* p. 326. of St. *Austin*, St. *Hierome*, and the 2d. of *Theoph. Alexandrinus* p. 330.

To the 8th. consisting of those *which labour of obscurity by an evidently ambiguous word*, that
of

of *Optatus* p. 327. The first from *Gerson* p. 331. and that from *Lyræ* p. 332.

St. *Cyprian's* Testimony was writ by him to defend an Errour, which both wee and the Protestants hold for such, and therefore no wonder if (as *Bellarmin* sayes) *more errantium ratiocinaretur*, hee discoursed after the rate of those that err; that is, assumes false Grounds to build his errour on. Whence the inferring an acknowledg'd false Conclusion from it, is an argument rather his Principle was not sound.

I know, Sir, you will fume at this usage of your Testimonies: but with what reason? For first, you putting them down rawly, without particularizing their force or import, or driving them home to any point, my very sorting them under these Heads, sounds a greater particularity in my Exceptions and Answer, than you shew'd any in alledging them. Next, you had refus'd to do mee the reason I begg'd in my Letter to my Answerer §. 8. in vouching your Testimonies to bee *Conclusive* or Satisfactory; which unless you did, I had already told you there it was my resolution to give them no other Answer. And I shall candidly make known my Intention why I do so, and shall ever do so, till you come to some good point in that particular. I had observ'd what multitudes of voluminous Books had and might bee writ in the way of Citation without any possibility of *satisfying*, that is, to the extream loss of time, and prejudice to rational

nal souls, while any Citation however qualify'd was admitted, and no Principles laid to sort them, and show which were Conclusive; wherefore I judg'd it the best way to drive you from that insignificant, and endless way of writing, to tell in short my exceptions against each Testimony, and to force you to vouch them *Conclusive*. And I pray, why should I or any be put to show each of those Citations, to our excessive pains, inefficacious, whereas your self, who is the Alledger, will not take pains to show any one of them to be efficacious? But your way here is the weakest in that kind I ever read or heard of. You huddle together a clutter of Citations, never apply them particularly as I constantly did mine: Overleap all considerations of their qualifications, *nakedly set them down*, (as you say p. 332) and then tell us *they are enough to satisfy any unpassionate Reader that dare trust himself with the use of his own Eyes and Reason*. Which is plausible indeed to flatter fools that are passionately self-conceited, otherwise I conceive *an unpassionate Reader* will require much more, if he ever knew what Controversy meant. Hee would know the variety of Circumstances, Antecedents, Consequents, &c. Besides, speaking Equivocally or Rhetorically, not distinctly and literally, may alter every Testimony there; Above all hee would consider whether they were expressive onely of some persons *Opinions*, and not rather of the *solid and constant*

stant sense of the faithful in that Age ; vvithout
 which they want the nature of Testimonies. Is
 it *clear to every man's Eyes and Reason*, none of
 these or other faults render all yours Inefficaci-
 ous? Is it *clear* that when they say Scripture is
plain, they mean plain *to all*, even Heathens
 that never heard of Faith, (such must bee the
Plainness of the *Rule of Faith*) or onely to those
 who have learn't Christian Doctrin *already* by
 the *Church* ; that is, who bring their Rule *with*
them. I am sure St. *Auſtin de Doctrinâ Christianâ*,
 your best Testimony, speaks of such Readers as
 are *timentes Deum ac pietate mansueti*, those
which fear God, and are *meek with piety* ; that
 is those which are not onely *Faithful* or *Chri-*
stians already, but *pious* and *good Christians* ;
 which makes it nothing to your purpose. Again,
 some one passage may bee so plain as a learned
 man may in the opinion of learned men plainly
 confound an Adversary ; but will it bee clear
 and plain in all necessary points to the vulgar,
 who hear a great many hard words brought on
 both sides, and have no skill to judge who has
 the better in such contests ? yet the *Rule of*
Faith must bee *plain even to the vulgar*, and able
 to give them Satisfaction. Again, when the Fa-
 thers provoke to the Scripture, is it not against
 those who *deny* the *Church*, but *accept* the *Scrit-*
ture, and so the necessity of disputing out of
 some commonly-acknowledg'd Principle, may
 bee the onely reason they take that method ?

'Tis evidently so, in that you quote from St. *Austin* against *Maximinus* p. 329. and against the Donatists, who deny'd the Judgment of the Catholik Church *quæ ubique terrarum diffunditur*; and so hee was to prove his point *ubi sit Ecclesia*, out of Scripture or no way. Again, is it clear out of the Citations *nakedly set down*, what went before and after? Is it clear for example that when they speak highly of Scripture, they mean not Scripture *unsenc't*, but onely taken as *Significative* of God's sence, as it must, to be *the Rule of Faith*; or, if of Scripture *senc't*, they mean not *senc't by the Church*, but by the *human skill* of private persons, which is the true point between us? St. *Austin* without doubt makes the Church the *Interpreter* of Scripture, as is clearly seen by his Discourse at the end of his 17. Chap. *Of the Profit of Beleeving*, which spoils your pretence to his Authority. Nay, do not they often mean by *Scripture* the very *Sence* of it, that is *Christs Doctrine* or the *Gospel*? As oft as you hear them speak of the *Things that are written*, or call them *Principles*, or *The Rule of Truth* and *Opinions*, or speak of *conforming other Doctrines to them*, and such like, so oft they speak of the *Doctrine* it self contain'd in Scripture, or the *Truths* found there. Such is that of *Clemens* cited by you p. 316. 317. which speaks meerly of the *Sence* of it, or the *Truths* in it, which hee makes deservedly the *Rule* to
other

other *Truths*; and hence, now hee names *Scripture*, then, the *Tradition of the Church*, then *Scripture* again, it being indifferent to his purpose, the same *sense* (which hee onely intends) being included in both. Such is also evidently your best Testimony, to wit, that of *Irenæus*, which speaks of the *Gospel* it self, *preach't* and *writ*; that is, clearly of the Sence indifferent to either way of Expression. But what is this or indeed all that is said there to the *Letter of Scripture* taken as *Significative of God's Sense*, that is, not for that *Sense*, nor as *including* it, but as the *Means* and *Way* to it. (as it must bee taken when 'tis meant for a *Rule of Faith*) and the plainness and Certainty of that *Way*, to all that are yet to come to Faith, taking that Letter as interpretable by private Skill and Maxims of Language-learning, which is the true point between you and us? Bring Testimonies for *this*, and you will do wonders. To use your own words p. 318. *I need not shew* what I have discours't here of every of his Testimonies in particular; for, *whosoever shall read them with this Key will find they are of no force to conclude what hee drives* (or ought to drive) *at*.

I am loath to suggest any Jealousie of your Insincerity in all these Citations, though you have seldome fail'd in that point. Present my service to your Friend Mr. *Stillingsfleet*, and assure him hee shall not bee neglected, though there were no
other

other reason but your high commendations of him.

Your humble Servant

J. Sargeant

A Postscript to the Reader,

READER,

THough I write to Mr. T. yet I publish to thee, and so have a Title to salute thee with a line or two. Tell mee then, dost not find thy Expectation deluded, which, *Sure-footing* had rais'd, and our Controversie begin to slide back into petty squabbles. Consider, I beseech thee how little I contributed to it, nay what care I took to prevent it; hazarding some ill opinion of singularity in putting forth antecedently a *Letter* to my Answerer, requesting wee might hold to a *Conclusive Method*, rather than (which I foresaw) permit the clearing that most concerning point in hand relapse into wordish Talk. If thou readest that Letter, I hope thou wilt acquit mee, and think it rationall; nay more, thou wilt easily see that Mr. T. not onely waves speaking to it, or giving reason why, but goes point-blank opposit to it, using frequent Ironies, quibbles and little squibs of University-wit; and

neither laying Principles, nor admitting, or denying my Consequences (except very seldom) nor distinguishing Testimonies, or vouching any Thing or Way hee builds on to bee *Conclusive* ; but catching mistakingly at this little word, and the other, putting upon mee twenty false meanings, with all the crafty Arts that may bee to make mee relinquish pursuing the method I had begun, so disadvantageous to him, and fall to clear my self and accuse him, which is little to our Cause and unfavoury to our Readers, and so, not worth heeding or reading ; whence hee and his Friends might hope the Discourse would die and come to nothing. And, indeed, who expects better from him, who characters Controversie (which is the Science or Knowledge of the Grounds of Faith) to bee nothing but a *Blessed Art of Eternall Wrangling* ? By which means hee gains himself indeed much credit for a *great Controvertist*, who avoids all Methods of *Concluding* any thing, that is, labours to keep on foot and promote all the *Ways of Wrangling* ; and makes his Adversary *none*, who pursues *Conclusiveness* and *Wayes to avoid Wrangling*. But the plot shall not take ; I shall still go on my Way in my Answer ; and to this End that I might there onely attend thy Benefit, I have voided out of the Way this riff-raff with which this *Great Controvertist* in his Way had so learnedly assaulted mee. In a word, I declare my resolution (God giving life and health) to bee
this.

this. I will never leave following on my blow; till either I bring them to lay Principles that will bear the test; or, it come to bee made evident to all the world they have *none*. What I attempt is, to settle the *Absolute Immoveableness* of *Faith* against my Adversary, whose avow'd Position 'tis p. 118, that '*'tis possible to bee False*'; nay the Certainty of Scripture too, which hee puts in the same case as to it's *Firmness*. Pardon the sleightness in composing this, and perhaps some possible oversight, though my conscience knows of none. I am chid by my Doctor for writing it while I was in a course of Physick, my strength and health both much decay'd. Which, if it pleases God of his Goodness to restore, I promise thee amends.

April
7. 66.

Thy Soul's hearty Well-wisher

J. S.

F I N I S.



ERRATA.

Page 7. line 16. *Description*. p. 14. l. 10. *Sessions*. p. 17. l. 17. *in his*. 16. l. 30. *You proceed*. p. 30. l. 16. *particular*. p. 32. l. ult. *a bout*. p. 36. l. 22. *beesfoot'd*. l. 23. 100; *whereas* l. 24. *a Distinction*. d. 39. l. 11. *wee too*. p. 40. l. 27. *Tertullian*. p. 48. l. 21. *determin*. p. 49. l. 19. *determinate*. p. 56. l. 23. *your Confute*. p. 63. l. 3. *the cause*. p. 66. l. 10 *from any*. p. 69. l. 2, 3. *Knowledges*. p. 75. l. 16. *despair*. l. 27. *demonstration*. p. 77. l. ult. *Thur*. p. 95. l. 15. *tenth*. p. 98. l. 2. *more forcible*. p. 105. l. 21. *self*. p. 106. l. 1. 10 *some*. p. 107. l. 16. *Philosopher's*. p. 121. l. 23. *Tradition's*. p. 112. l. 9. *Binius*. p. 117. l. 1. *falsehoods*. p. 120. l. 28. *deliver*.



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